P.M RECD

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Sofia, Bulgaria.

INTELLIGENCE DIVISION DEPT. OF STATE

No. 86.

August 8, 1930.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE SEP 19 1930 ASSISTANT SECRETARY STATE

AUG 27 30

Subject: Declaration of friendship for Bulgaria by Mustafa Kemal.

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK	Yes	No
To the Field		✓
In U. S. A.	✓	

Copy to M.I.D.

SEP 19 1930

DEPARTMENT OF STATE AUG 28 1930 DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

INDEX BUREAU 767.74/23

The Honorable

The Secretary of State

Washington

767.74

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that the statement of friendship for Bulgaria made by the President of the Turkish Republic to Haka Tarif, Falik Rifki, Hedjmedine Sadki, Ahmed C hukri and Kemal Salih, Turkish journalists on their way to Bulgaria to attend at the invitation of the Sofia Press Association a meeting of Bulgarian, Polish and Austrian journalists, was received with acclaim by the Bulgarian press.

According to the local press Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha addressed himself in the following terms to the departing Turkish journalists.

"At the....

FILED SEP 23 1930

"At the end of the Balkan wars I went to Sofia as military attaché. I remained there for a year during which time I had very close relations with the Bulgarians, and thereby gained certain impressions.

"I analyzed these impressions and finally came to the conclusion that those of a psychological order come about from the fact that Turks and Bulgars have the same origin,- belong to the same race.

"These two peoples are of Central Asian origin and have conserved intact the same blood.

"At the same time, I communicated these ideas to more than one Bulgar, and the intellectuals who were informed concerning the history of humanity confirmed my theories.

"During my sojourn in Bulgaria, my feeling of friendship increased toward this country; it is needless to add that this feeling was reciprocated by the Bulgars.

"Since that time the reason and the significance of this friendship, of this fraternal rapprochement, have become strikingly clear.

"It is incontestable that factors such as language and religion have caused differences, as much on the side of the Turks as on that of the Bulgars, but I do not believe that in this year 1930 factors of this sort, prejudices resulting from ordinary political currents, should be given consideration by Turks, or their blood brothers, the Bulgars.

"These.....

"These remarks of mine are based neither on conjecture nor hypothesis, but on reality.

"Go and mix with the Bulgars.

"I have no doubt that after you have been amongst the Bulgars you will not fail on your return, in exposing to me your impressions, to confirm most warmly all that I have said.

"One last word - go to Bulgaria. You will like the Bulgars; and recall to their minds in the course of your labors that I am the man who was in Sofia in 1912 and who established with the Bulgars, our blood brothers, relations of sincere friendship."

Typical of the press comment on this gesture on the part of the Turkish President are the following extracts from several articles:

La Bulgarie: The Bulgarian people have great sympathy and admiration for Kemal. They have equally, most friendly feelings for the Turkish people. To-day no contentious question of moment exists between the two states. Therefore the common friendship of the two peoples is a disinterested one, and in consequence is of a solid and durable nature.

Democratitcheski Zgovor: In expressing our profound gratitude we wish to assure the President of Turkey and also the Turkish people that in the Bulgarian soul there is to-day only room for friendly feelings toward Turkey. Let us hope that on the Bulgarian side, as is the case with Turkey, everything will be done to reinforce the reciprocal sentiments of friendship of the two peoples.

Préporetz: .....

Préporetz: Our differences of another time with the Turks are explainable by the faulty means of communication of that obscure time which made it impossible for us to find the means to reinforce our relations. We saw only the details. The essentials which united us escaped our attention.

Slovo: The passage of time which separates us from the Bulgaro-Turkish struggle of former days has effaced sombre remembrances. For a long time now mutual esteem has been transmuted into friendship which happily unites the two peoples and their respective leaders.

Very respectfully yours,

Henry W. Shoemaker,

Henry W. Shoemaker,
American Minister.

File No. 710.

Copy to E.I.C. Paris.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

INDEX BUREAU
767.74/24

SEE 033.6774/1 FOR Despatch # 151

FROM Bulgaria (Shoemaker) DATED Dec.1,1930
TO NAME

1—1127 GPO

REGARDING:

Visit of Tewfik Ruchdi Bey, Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs in connection with general relations between Turkey and Bulgaria.

(Copy of despatch attached)

rm

Sofia, Bulgaria, December 1, 1930.

No.151

Subject: VISIT OF TEWFIK RUCHDI BEY.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that Tewfik Ruchdi Bey, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, is scheduled to arrive in Sofia this evening for a visit of two days. The Minister is returning to Angora by way of Sofia from an official visit to Rome.

No announcement has been made here concerning the purpose of the visit. It is the Legation's opinion, however, despite the statement made in Rome by the Turkish statesman to the effect that his proposed visit to Sofia is without

specific

specific purpose, that it is not unconnected with the Bulgaro-Greek negotiations now in progress at Athens. Italy has already interested itself in these negotiations, which have for an end the liquidation of all questions outstanding between Bulgaria and Greece and the conclusion of a commercial treaty, and it is believed that Rome is now calling upon Turkey, in view of the friendly relations now existing between Ankara and Athens, to lend a hand in the interest of friendly relations in the Balkan Peninsula.

That the Turkish Government is anxious to see a rapprochement between Greece and Bulgaria was indicated several weeks ago by an article from the pen of Mahmoud Bey, which appeared in the semi-official MILLIET. Mahmoud Bey stopped off in Sofia on his way to the Conference of the Preliminary Commission on Disarmament in Geneva. According to him, the obstacles in the way to Bulgaro-Greek rapprochement are by no means as great as those that impeded the path to Franco-Greek friendship. Furthermore Mahmoud Bey found in Sofia an atmosphere favorable to an understanding, and a friendly response to Turkish interests in the furtherance of this project.

According to the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs the stumbling block is the refusal of the Greek Government to consider the claims of some six thousand Bulgarian immigrants to compensation for properties abandoned in Greece. These immigrants failed to file claim for compensation within the specified period of delay, in consequence of which Greece considers the question a closed one. The Bulgarian point of view is that no law, private or international, nor any conventions, can rob these immigrants of the right to compensation.

As

As the outstanding question at issue between Greece and Turkey, prior to the recent accord between these two states, was of a similar nature it may well be thought at Ankara, Athens, and Rome that the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs is peculiarly well fitted to lend a hand in this matter.

I may add that it is not unlikely that the visit of Tewfik Rushdi Bey to Sofia will cause uneasiness in certain quarters, similar to that which resulted from the simultaneous visit to Ankara of Count Bethlen and Mr. Venizelos. Presumably Rome, Ankara and Sofia have given due consideration to this possibility and feel confident that they can reassure France and Yugoslavia. It is most fortunate, in this connection, that the proposed visit to Sofia of Count Bethlen, reported in the Legation's despatch No.136 of October 20, 1930, did not materialize, due doubtless to the unfortunate construction that might have been placed upon such a visit at the time of the marriage of King Boris, and following immediately upon the meeting in Ankara of Count Bethlen, Mr. Venizelos, and Turkish statesmen. Count Bethlen's visit has been postponed until next spring.

Respectfully yours,

Henry W. Shoemaker,
American Minister.

Sofia, Bulgaria, December 1, 1930.

No.161

Subject: VISIT OF TEWFIK RUSHDI BEY.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that Tewfik Rushdi Bey, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, is scheduled to arrive in Sofia this evening for a visit of two days. The Minister is returning to Angora by way of Sofia from an official visit to Rome.

No announcement has been made here concerning the purpose of the visit. It is the Legation's opinion, however, despite the statement made in Rome by the Turkish statesman to the effect that his proposed visit to Sofia is without

specific

specific purpose, that it is not unconnected with the Bulgaro-Greek negotiations now in progress at Athens. Italy has already interested itself in these negotiations, which have for an end the liquidation of all questions outstanding between Bulgaria and Greece and the conclusion of a commercial treaty, and it is believed that Rome is now calling upon Turkey, in view of the friendly relations now existing between Ankara and Athens, to lend a hand in the interest of friendly relations in the Balkan Peninsula.

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Respectfully yours,

Henry W. Shoemaker,
American Minister.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

INDEX BUREAU
767.74/25

SEE 033.6774/2 FOR Despatch # 155

FROM Bulgaria (Shoemaker) DATED Dec.10,1930
TO NAME

1—1127

25

REGARDING:

Visit of Tewfik Ruchdi Bey, Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Bulgaria.

Believes that the-, was made in the interest of a Greco-Bulgarian rapprochement.

rm

Sofia, Bulgaria, December 10, 1930.

No.155 CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: VISIT OF TEWFIK RUSHDI BEY.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department, in continuation of my despatch No.151 of December 1, 1930, that Tewfik Rushdi Bey, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, arrived in Sofia on the evening of December 1, proceeding on his way to Constantinople and Ankara on the evening of December 3.

During his two days' visit to Sofia, Tewfik Rushdi Bey had conversations with the Bulgarian Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the President of the

Sobranje

Sobranje, and with leading deputies and certain of the foreign diplomats. He was also received by the King. Upon the departure of the Turkish Minister, the Bulgarian Government issued the following communiqué:

> "In the course of their various conversations the two ministers (Scuroff and Tewfik Ruchdi Bey) were able to verify to their entire satisfaction the relations of friendship and complete confidence which so happly exist between the two countries. They were also able to ascertain that their views with reference to a foreign policy calculated to assure by pacific means the peaceful development and complete independence of their countries, are identical, as are also their views with reference to the realization of the aims of this policy. Lastly, the two ministers exchanged views on the utility of more active collaboration between the two countries in economic and cultural fields".

In his interview with the representatives of the Sofia and the foreign press, Tewfik Ruchdi Bey stated, as he had previously done in Rome, that it is the Turkish view that peace in the Balkans can be assured only by the existence of a strong, independent Bulgaria. He explained that Turkey desires to consolidate its friendship with Bulgaria, and that therefore he had seized the first opportunity for a personal exchange of political views with Bulgarian officials. Political wiseacres, according to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, are too prone to group states into opposing camps. The formation of such camps <u>was</u> the pre-war method of conducting foreign relations, but a new conception with reference to relations between states exists today. Today there is a new class of states, i.e., those that wish to be on good terms with <u>all</u>, and especially with their neighbors. This new conception in the field of foreign relations has given rise to the need for new methods in the conduct of those relations. One of these, the Treaty of neutrality, has given excellent results.

Regional

Regional rapprochements will facilitate general rapprochement. In concluding Tewfik Ruchdi Bey told the representatives of the press that he was happy both for personal and political reasons to be in Sofia. "With the friendship which exists between us, the establishment of personal contact between those charged with the affairs of state is useful".

The Bulgarian Press of all political persuasions welcomed Tewfik Ruchdi Bey's visit with enthusiasm. Needless to say the visit evoked considerable press comment on Bulgarian foreign policy. Most typical of such comment was perhaps that of RADICAL, which said: "Bulgaria has only one policy - it is the policy of peace and friendship with all states, near and far. But this policy does not exclude the energetic defense of all the legitimate interests of the Bulgarian Nation. That is a right that belongs to all independent states".

Some have seen in the visit of the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs a further step in the creation of a "revisionist group" led by Italy, Germany, and Russia and supported by Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria and Hungary. For example, the Polish Minister said to me the day of the arrival of Tewfik Ruchdi Bey that he presumed that I was well aware of the fact that the Turkish Foreign Minister was coming to Sofia in the interest of such a grouping. So far as I am aware, no one has yet been able to make out a logical case in support of this contention. Presumably, Turkey still adheres to the Nationalist Pact, and Greece can by no means be characterized as "unsatisfied" from the

standpoint

standpoint of the peace settlement. That Tewfik Ruchdi Bey visited Sofia in the interest of a Greco-Bulgarian rapprochement, I have no doubt. In fact the Italian Minister at Sofia, with whom Tewfik Ruchdi Bey had a long conversation, told the writer that his supposition to that effect was correct. The Italian Minister added that in his opinion at least two years will pass before the ground for rapprochement has been properly prepared. According to him Mr. Molloff, the Bulgarian Minister of Finance, is the one who is delaying the settlement of the property questions outstanding between Greece and Bulgaria.

But to return to the main issue - it is my opinion that Tewfik Ruchdi Bey could work in the interest of a Greco-Bulgarian understanding, and even at the behest of Italy, without having as an aim the creation of a "revisionist bloc". That he believes that Serbian hegemony of the South-Slavs would not be in the interest of Turkey is known from the proposal for a Bulgaro-Turkish understanding on Balkan matters made by him in 1925 to Simeon Radeff, then Bulgarian Minister at Ankara and now Bulgarian Minister at Washington. In the light of this knowledge one can understand the Turkish Minister's desire for a strong Bulgaria. A weak Bulgaria is a standing invitation to Belgrade to assert hegemony. Hence the desire, which fits in admirably with Italy's efforts to check France, for Greco-Bulgarian rapprochement.

That Athens is a willing party to such plans is an opinion based locally on the belief that the existing friendship between Athens and Belgrade is built upon sand, in view

of

of the "ingrained" interest of the Serbian political leaders in the Port of Salonika. Furthermore, a recent speech made by Mr. Michailacopoulos on the extension of the Turco-Greek pact is locally interpreted to refer to Bulgaria. Commenting editorially upon this speech MIR said:

> "Mr. Michailacopoulos has Bulgaria in mind. A pact between Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria would certainly strengthen the position of Greece with reference to Yugoslavia. Other considerations in favor of a triple entente between these three countries have been expressed by Count Bethlen in the interview given the NEW YORK TIMES. Having stated that it is too early to speak of a "revisionist group", he added that the conversations which he had had at Angora with Greek statesmen had a more immediate object, i.e., the prevention of a Slav bloc in the Balkans. This manoeuver might cause Yugoslavia to change its policy, were the Yugoslavs less chauvinistic, as isolation of Yugoslavia in the Balkans is its logical end".

It is the Legation's opinion that nothing more than an exchange of views occurred during the visit of Tewfik Ruchdi Bey. Mr. Bouroff is most reluctant to take any steps that would burn the bridges leading to Paris. In fact, in conversation with the writer several days ago on the subject of Tewfik Ruchdi Bey's visit, Mr. Bouroff said that as between Italian and French influence in the matter of Bulgaria's foreign policy, he would always prefer to choose the latter. However, he is not a free agent in the present Government, and so far as the King is concerned, his views are unknown. No doubt Tewfik Ruchdi Bey left Sofia with the tacit consent of his Bulgarian colleague to see what could be done at Athens in the way of a settlement of the outstanding questions between Bulgaria and Greece.

That Belgrade has taken the visit seriously is inferred in Sofia from the fact that the Yugoslav Minister for Foreign Affairs is now in Athens conferring with

Mr.

Mr. Venizelos. Furthermore, the new Yugoslav Minister to Sofia left for Belgrade immediately after the visit of Tewfik Rushdi Bey, no doubt for the purpose of reporting in person to the Yugoslav Minister for Foreign Affairs, prior to the departure of that official for Athens.

Respectfully yours,

Henry W. Shoemaker,
American Minister.

710

copy to: E.I.G. Paris
American Embassy, Istanbul.
American Legation, Athens.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/26

SEE 033.7467/3 FOR despatch #1392

FROM Turkey (Grew) DATED Dec.10,1931.

TO NAME 1—1127 GPO

REGARDING:

Mixed Turko-Bulgar Convention-
Upon the visit of M.Mouchanoff,Bulgarian Official ,
to Turkey he stated to the press that,-- had been formed
which would help both countries in their economic measures.

mc

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74 /27

SEE 033.7467/4 FOR despatch #331

FROM Bulgaria (Shoemaker) DATED Dec.11,1931.

TO NAME

1—1127 GPO

REGARDING:

Treaties between Bulgaria and Turkey.
M.Mooshanoff,Bulgarian Minister,explained several reasons for his visit to Ankara,one in particular, to settle certain questions relative to the application of—

mc

NE

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sofia, Bulgaria, March 17, 1932.

No. 386

Subject: VISIT OF TEWFIK RUSHDI BEY

Office of Economic Adviser
JUN 1 1932
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR 12 32
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767.74
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033.6774

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR 18 1932
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

File
cwa

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that Tewfik Rushdi Bey, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, passed two days, March the 12th and March 13th, in Sofia on his way from the Disarmament Conference at Geneva to Ankara.

During his visit of forty-eight hours the Turkish statesman conferred at length with Mr. Mooshanoff, the Bulgarian Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and was received by the King. The visit, of course, gave rise to extravagant rumors in the more sensational foreign press, as did the visit of Mr. Mooshanoff to Ankara last December, but the Legation has not learned of any facts or heard of any sufficiently convincing theories in connection

with

767.74/28
FILED
APR 22 1932

with either visit to cause it to change the opinions expressed in its despatch No.331, of December 11, 1931, and to see in the active friendship of Bulgaria and Turkey a development hostile to the legitimate interests of any third state. On passing through Belgrade Tewfik Rushdi Bey was interviewed by representatives of the Yugoslav press. To these journalists he ridiculed the idea of a Turco-Bulgaro-Greek Bloc hostile to Yugoslavia. In Sofia, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs explained that his visit was in the interest of Balkan rapprochement; that Turkey seeks economic, cultural and political collaboration with Bulgaria as a step toward such collaboration between all the states of the Balkan peninsula.

033.7467/4

At the end of the visit an official communication was issued by the Bulgarian Foreign Office to the effect that the Bulgarian Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs had held a long conference during which they had exchanged views on the solution of certain problems of an economic nature; had noted the friendship and community of interest which exist between the two states; and had examined into the possibilities of the future development of this friendship and of these common interests. Several days after the departure of Tewfik Rushdi Bey the Bulgarian Foreign Office announced that during the conversations between the two ministers it was decided that Bulgaria will send two delegates to Ankara in the near future to collaborate there with two delegates appointed by the Turkish Government on the problem of extending the commercial relations between the two states. At the same time it was announced that

the

the Bulgarian delegates charged with the negotiations relating to the application of the protocol to the Treaty of October 18, 1925, dealt with in the Legation's despatch No.358, of February 5, 1932, have explained in detail to the Turkish delegates the Bulgarian point of view and that Tewfik Rushdi Bey has agreed to give this matter his "friendly attention" in the very near future with a view to elaborating a plan for the early application of the protocol.

767.7411/14

It is interesting to note, in connection with the visit of Tewfik Rushdi Bey, that although the Bulgarian Government finds cause for satisfaction in Turkey's active friendship, there exists a strong feeling of concern in Bulgaria as to what may be thought abroad. For example, during the visit Mr. Mooshanoff and his assistants were most diligent in assuring members of the local diplomatic corps that the visit had no political significance, which of course is absurd. In the Legation's opinion this concern should not be interpreted as a manifestation of a guilty conscience, but rather as an indication of the servility to which the events of the past ten years have brought Bulgaria. As stated in the Legation's despatch No.331, of December 11, 1931, the Government of the National Bloc is not content to follow the willy-nilly foreign policy of its predecessor. Nevertheless, the courage of conviction is frequently conspicuous by its absence.

Respectfully yours,

Henry W. Shoemaker,
Henry W. Shoemaker.

710

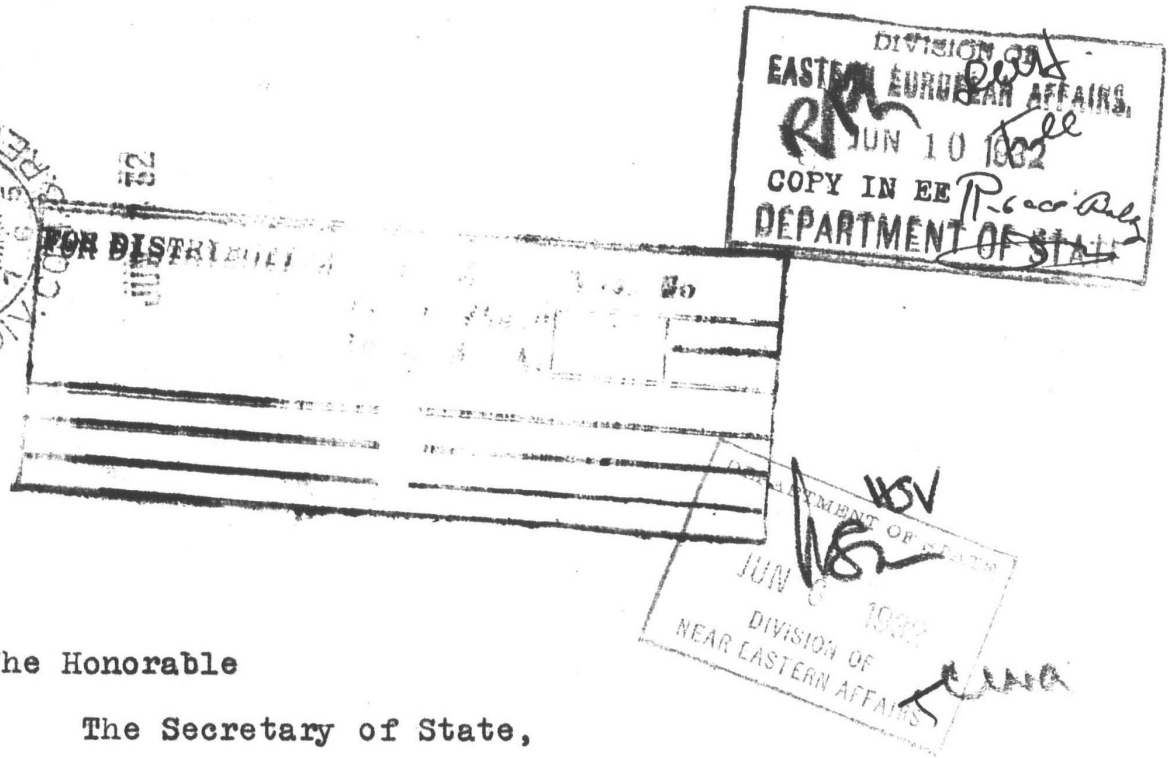
Copy sent to E.I.C. Paris.

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sofia, Bulgaria, May 19, 1932.

No.424

Subject: VISIT OF TURKISH STATESMEN TO MOSCOW.



767.74
note
661.7431

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that the recent visit of Ismet Pasha and of Tewfik Rushdi Bey to Moscow, accompanied by a large delegation of Turkish deputies, government functionaries and business men, has caused Bulgarian opinion to stop and reflect in the matter of Bulgaro-Turkish relations. During the past month many Bulgarians, not excluding those responsible for the country's foreign policy, have felt that perhaps there is still something to be learned as to the true nature of Turko-Soviet relations.

LA BULGARIE, the semi-official organ of the Bulgarian Foreign Office, in a leading article on the visit of the

Turkish -

767.74/29

FILED
JUN 18 1932

Turkish statesmen to Moscow, has attempted to strike a note of reassurance. "It is undeniable", says this journal, "that Russo-Turkish friendship is passing through a period of exaltation". LA BULGARIE continues as follows: "This fact should not be misunderstood. With the passage of time there will be an abatement of fervor, a normalization concomitant with a consolidation of the developments of recent years in the relations between the two states. Therefore, those who find cause for concern in these burning manifestations may be reassured. Besides, Turkey, which up to this time has given adequate proof of pacific aims, will not deny the ideals of its Chief of State by a policy of adventure."

The Legation is inclined to feel that in the foregoing the editor of LA BULGARIE missed the mark, that is to say, that his article does not carry conviction but instead has something about it of the small boy who whistles in order to keep up his courage when passing a cemetery on a dark night. Nevertheless it will doubtless take more than a visit of Ismet Pasha and Company to Moscow to cause Bulgaria to foreswear the possible benefits that may accrue to it from the active friendship of Turkey.

In this connection it may be reported that although the Bulgarian press has stated on numerous occasions during the past few months that a delegation of Bulgarian business men is about to leave for Moscow to look into the question of resumption of direct trade relations between the two states, no such delegation has yet set out from Bulgaria, and recently the Bulgarian Minister of Finance has officially announced that he does not

anticipate

anticipate, at least for the time being, the resumption of commercial relations with Soviet Russia, especially so long as Bulgaria's financial problems remain unsettled and Western markets for Bulgarian goods remain unsecured. The Minister has pointed out that it would be folly to jeopardize Bulgaria's commercial and financial relations with the West for the doubtful benefit of trading with Russia. The Legation understands that the Minister of Finance has all along been supported in this view by the Democratic and Liberal ministers of the Cabinet and that recently the Agrarian ministers have accepted his opinion. Perhaps after Bulgaria's financial problems have been settled and the Powers have taken a firm decision with reference to the economic rehabilitation of Central Europe, the question of direct trade relations with Russia will again come to the fore in Bulgaria.

Respectfully yours,

Henry W. Shoemaker,
Henry W. Shoemaker.

710

Copies sent to E.I.C.

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sofia, Bulgaria, July 19, 1932.

No.473

Subject: ENTRY OF TURKEY INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
R-6000-Turk
AUG 22 1932
COPY IN EE
CLK
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 20 1932

DEPT. OF STATE
MID
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PM RECD

AUG 10 32
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
A-C/C
AUG 25 1932
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FOR DISTRIBUTION
To the Field
In U. S. A.
Copy to MID
AUG 27 1932

767.74
note
500C001
874.4016

767.74/30

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 11 1932
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that the entry of Turkey into the League of Nations has been hailed with considerable pleasure by the local press and occasioned a congratulatory telegram from Mr. Guirguinoff, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Tewfik Rushdi Bey. The Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs replied in terms of warmest friendship for Bulgaria. The local press has remarked that the entry of Turkey into the League of Nations is a most natural development, in view of that country's pacific aims, and that this step should convince everyone that Turkey is not dominated by political and social concepts flowing from Moscow. The opinion has also been expressed that the entry of Turkey into the League

should

should convince even the most skeptical that the League is a permanent institution fulfilling a real need in international affairs.

In this connection, it may be recorded that the Turkish press has recently had much to say, to the detriment of Bulgaria, about the murder of a Turk in the village of Kessarevo, near Gorna Orehovitza sometime last April by a mob of Bulgarian peasants. It appears that a field-guard of the village of Kessarevo, a Bulgarian, attempted to place under arrest two horses of the Turk, which had been found grazing in a wheat field of a Bulgarian peasant. Enraged by the designs of the field-guard, the Turk killed him. He was then seized by the police and placed in a temporary jail from which he was taken by a mob and so badly beaten that he died shortly thereafter in a hospital in Tirnovo, to which he had been conveyed by the Mayor of Kessarevo. Some days later the mosque of Kessarevo was destroyed by fire. This incident appears to have been described in the Turkish press as the wholesale massacre of the Turkish population of a Bulgarian village. The matter is now in the hands of the Turkish Minister at Sofia, who does not appear to be inclined to exaggerate the importance of the incident. The Central Government is now dealing with the case and it is not presumed that it will be permitted to cloud the official relations of the two states.

Respectfully yours,

For the Minister:

Maynard B. Barnes.

Maynard B. Barnes,
Secretary of Legation.

710
MBB:MC
Copy sent to E.I.C.

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sofia, Bulgaria, April 26, 1933.

No.645

Subject: UNPLEASANT INCIDENT BETWEEN TURKS AND BULGARIANS AT RAZGRAD.

DEPT. OF STATE DIV. COM. & REC.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE MAY 10 1933 ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK Yes No
To the Field
In U. S. A.
Copy to M.D.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAY 17 1933
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS
MAY 26 1933
767.74
767.74/31
FILED MAY 31 1933

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that Bulgaro-Turkish relations have become somewhat disturbed recently by the reports of a conflict between Mussulmans and Bulgarians at Razgrad, a village near Shumen in eastern Bulgaria, but in the center of a large Turkish population. It appears that in order to carry out plans for a new park the Municipality of Razgrad had several years ago decided on the removal of a Turkish cemetery. Discontented with the lengthy delay in giving effect to the decision, a small group of Bulgarians set fire to the hut of the custodian of the graveyard on Easter night, and also broke

off

off a number of tombstones. When the news reached Turkey an infuriated crowd collected in front of the Bulgarian Legation in Istanbul, and at Adrianople a mob broke all of the windows in the Bulgarian Consulate. The Bulgarian press has done all it can to belittle the incident, just as it did nearly two years ago when a mob set fire to a mosque in a village near Tirnovo after a Bulgarian had been shot by a Turk in a dispute over the pasturage of some horses. It is thought that the present incident will eventually pass over, as was the case in the previous incident, after a certain amount of angry protest on the part of the Turks.

702.7467

Respectfully yours,

Henry W. Shoemaker,

Henry W. Shoemaker,

710

HWS:MC

Copies sent to E.I.C. (3)

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74 /32

SEE 867.9111/398 FOR Report #-

FROM Istanbul (Allen) DATED May 3, 1933

TO NAME 1—1127 •r•

REGARDING:

[redacted]

Desecration of a Turkish cemetery in Bulgaria at Razgrad and demonstration of Turkish students as a result thereof.

Wi

Insofar as it has been possible to learn the facts from the newspapers, a Turkish cemetery at Razgrad in Bulgaria was attacked during the night of April 14 by Bulgarians numbering between 15 and 200, according as one accepts the Bulgarian or the Turkish version. The fence surrounding the cemetery was destroyed and the cabin occupied by the caretaker was burned. The cemetery itself was one in which burials were no longer permitted and the ground had been marked for expropriation and annexation to the local municipal park some two or three years ago. In spite of this latter fact, it would seem that the Razgrad Moslems had recently made burials in the cemetery and it was seemingly this which led certain Bulgarian hotheads, bent on having the municipal park enlarged at the expense of the Moslems, to take matters into their own hands. As presented by the Turkish press, a desecration of the cemetery, in the full sense of the term, had occurred, graves being opened and bones pulled out and scattered about and this presentation naturally led to resentment although official circles appear to have been quite calm.

An Incident

767.74

However, the students of Istanbul did not choose to imitate the official restraint. They applied for permission to demonstrate and when this permission, according to the official version, was refused them, they decided to demonstrate anyhow. Accordingly, on April 20 toward four o'clock they repaired in small groups to a point near the Bulgarian Legation at Istanbul and marched to the Legation where violent speeches were delivered from the top of an automobile. The police intervened and dispersed the distrubers of order but

they

they had not yet finished with their program. Their next act was to proceed to the local Bulgarian cemetery where they went through the childish procedure of depositing a wreath as a lesson to the Bulgarians in good manners. Thereafter, they attempted to march to Taksim Square but en route they came into collision, not only with the police, but with gendarmes with bayonets fixed. The whole affair lasted some four hours and resulted in a few bruises and the arrest of eighty students, the chief of police being reported to be among those mauled.

It has already been said that the authorities maintain that the students acted without permission and it is undoubtedly true that toward the end the police and gendarmes were serious. Still, whatever the official records may show, it is difficult to believe that the students did not have word from somebody of influence that the proposed demonstration would not be looked upon with complete disfavor. In Turkey, people just do not stage such demonstrations without finding out in advance how the authorities feel. Moreover, although the official tone on the morrow of the demonstration was very severe and exemplary punishment was promised, this severity has gradually disappearedaand the arrested students have become something in the nature of heroes. Student associations in other towns have sent them telegrams of congratulation and lawyers have come forward with offers of their services, so that the president of the students' union has made bold to declare his detention illegal and has even threatened to attack the local authorities before the courts. Everything, in a word, seems to have been developing in the direction of a forgetting of the incident, at least of its grave features, and of the arrested students

getting

getting off with no other punishment than a few days in jail. To offset this, they have been getting a lot of publicity most warming to the cockles of their hearts.

On the other hand the press, or at least such unofficial organs as the CUMHURIYET, has continued to insist upon the gravity of what took place in Bulgaria, even reporting that the scheduled football game with the Bulgarians had been called off. From this fact and the rapidly changing attitude toward the arrested students, it is deduced that the authorities have been privy to everything which has taken place and that the principal business in hand is not the protection of abandoned Moslem graveyards in Bulgaria but the working of the Bulgarians into a disadvantageous diplomatic position from which they will be obliged to make certain concessions, probably in connection with their intransigent attitude toward the proposed Balkan Pact. As far as the writer is concerned, he attaches no importance whatever to the Razgrad incident except as it can be made to serve as a lever for prizing the Bulgarians loose from something they do not want to give up. As for the student demonstration at Istanbul, it was, for the writer, staged from start to finish by somebody speaking with the knowledge and consent of the government. Apparently, the incident has served its purpose and has been closed. At any rate, an announcement to that effect was made after the Turkish Foreign Minister en route to Geneva, had been met at Philipopolis on April 23 by the Bulgarian Prime Minister and the two had talked all the way to Sofia.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 867.9111/400 FOR Report #-

FROM Istanbul (Allen) DATED May 17, 1933

NAME

TO

1—1127

REGARDING:

Razgrad incident (destruction of a Turkish cemetery in Bulgaria).

767.74/33

33

Wi

The Razgrad cemetery incident discussed in the preceding report has not been entirely forgot by the Turkish press but the references to it have been few and they have not been characterized by the warmth which marked what was being said two weeks ago. News from Ankara is to the effect that the notice which had been filed of an intention to question the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the subject has been withdrawn, from which fact one concludes that it is not desired that there should be an airing of the matter before the Assembly. It is also significant that one hears no more of the punishment with which had been threatened the students arrested at Istanbul following the demonstration staged in protest against the Razgrad incident. One gathers that they are to be let off with a chiding the Gazi gave them in a telegram in which he told them to be "laborious, sentimental and nationalistic" and to "respect the principles and methods of the Republic". The calling off of a scheduled football match between Turkish and Bulgarian teams, which a fortnight ago was attributed to bad feeling engendered by the incident, is now attributed to failure of the Bulgarians to advance the stipulated expense money for the travel of the Turkish team.

The Razgrad Incident

767.74

The Bulgarians seem to have a special talent for offending their neighbors. According to the press, the Bishop of Sofia, speaking on the occasion of the observance

of

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/34

SEE 768.74/311 FOR #672

FROM Bulgaria (Shoemaker) DATED May 30, 1933

TO NAME

1—1127

REGARDING:

Formation of a Turko-Bulgaro-Greek group.

Evidence of plans for the -.

Wi

Sofia, Bulgaria, May 20, 1933.

No.672 CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: INDICATIONS THAT EFFORTS ARE AFOOT TO CREATE NEW GROUP IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that during his visit to Geneva early this month Mr. Neochanoff discussed the problems outstanding between Bulgaria and Greece with Mr. Maximos, the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, and that since his return to Bulgaria the Prime Minister has on several occasions spoken publicly of the desirability of an immediate settlement with Greece. According to reports here the Bulgarian Minister at Athens has also been busy during the past month in an attempt to prepare the ground for a settlement, and his opposite number in Sofia has

likewise

likewise been engaged in unusual activity along the same lines. It is also understood on good authority that the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs has been active in support of an early settlement between Bulgaria and Greece, and now comes news from Ankara, on the heels of the recent negotiations in Athens between the Greeks and the Turks, that the latter have proposed to Sofia the conclusion of a Bulgaro-Turkish pact of non-aggression. This news has been confirmed to a member of my staff by the Turkish Minister here.

As it is thought in well informed circles that the new commercial agreement between Turkey and Greece is to lead to the signature, on the occasion of the projected visit of Mr. Tsaldaris and Mr. Maximos to Ankara in September, of a political pact calculated to guarantee peace in the Eastern Mediterranean, it would not seem unreasonable to conclude, in view of the increased activity toward a settlement of Bulgaro-Greek differences and of the proposal of Turkey for a non-Aggression pact with Bulgaria, that steps are actually afoot to create something similar to the Little Entente in extreme South-eastern Europe. At any rate the Legation is of the opinion that an effort along these lines is being made, and in conversation on this point with a member of my staff the Greek Minister here has not seen fit to deny the suggestion. However, he is not very hopeful of an early settlement of the differences between his country and Bulgaria. He states that he finds the Bulgarians as intransigent today on the Kafandaris-Molloff problem as they have ever been. The Legation learns from the British

Minister

Minister that it has been the hope of his Government that the Kafandaris-Molloff problem can be settled at London during the coming Economic Conference. Settlement there, instead of by direct negotiations, would have the merit of making it possible for the two Governments to deal with intransigent public opinion by presenting the settlement to their respective publics as part and parcel of the general decisions taken by the Economic Conference. But as the Greek Minister points out, if Mr. Mooshanoff does not go to London, and he now says that he does not see how he can get away, there would seem to be little likelihood that the dispute over the Kafandaris-Molloff agreement and reparations can be liquidated there.

In conclusion it should be reported that the British Minister here is also of the opinion that plans are afoot for the creation of a Turko-Bulgaro-Greek group, and one gains the impression from him that the British Foreign Office would welcome such a development in Southeastern Europe. Further evidence in support of the opinion that efforts are under way to form this group is seen in the fact that lengthy meetings of the Foreign Relations Commission of the Sobranje have been held during the past few days and that Mr. Mooshanoff has let it be known that he will soon call into being an extraordinary committee composed of members of all political parties in Bulgaria for the purpose of discussing Bulgarian foreign policy.

Respectfully yours,

Henry W. Shoemaker.

MMB:MC
Copies sent to M.I.C. [illegible]
" " " Embassy, Istanbul
" " " Legation, Athens

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/35

SEE 768.74/313 FOR #680

FROM Bulgaria (Shoemaker) DATED June 10, 1933

TO NAME

1—1127 ...

REGARDING:

Statement of the Prime Minister that Bulgaro-Turkish relations have not suffered by the Razgrad incident ~~xxxxx~~ and that Turkey has sought to help in the realization of a settlement between Bulgaria and Greece.

351

W1

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/36

SEE 867.9111/403 FOR Report #-

FROM Istanbul (Allen) DATED June 28, 1933

TO NAME

1—1127 •F•

REGARDING:

Statement of Greek Prime Minister that there is nothing to rumors of a Turko-Bulgaro-Greek pact. Present aim is that the existing treaty of amity and treaty of commerce be supplemented by a "more intimate drawing-together".

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/137

SEE 867.9111/404 FOR Report #-

FROM Istanbul (Allen) DATED July 22, 1933

TO NAME

1—1127 ...

REGARDING:

Turko-Bulgaro-Greek pact.

Report that a - is under consideration.

Wi

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 774.00/65 FOR #720

FROM Bulgaria (Shoemaker) DATED Aug.5, 1933

TO

NAME

1—1127

767.74/38

REGARDING:

Proposed visit of Ismet Pasha, Prime Minister of Turkey, to Bulgaria.

W1

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/39

SEE 767.6812 Non-aggression/1 FOR #747

FROM Bulgaria (Barnes) DATED Sept.18, 1933

TO

NAME

1—1127

REGARDING:

Non-aggression pact between Greece and Turkey signed at Ankara on September 14.

Attitude of Bulgaria as concerns -.Probability that Bulgaria will not adhere to the pact but will renew the Treaty of Neutrality,Conciliation, Arbitration and Judicial Settlement with Turkey.

39

WI

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sofia, Bulgaria, September 29, 1933.

No.753

SUBJECT: VISIT OF ISMET PASHA AND TEWFIK RUSHDI BEY.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OCT 31 1933
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
OCT 16 33
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

FOR DISTRIBUTION Yes No
In U. S. A.
Copy to M.I.D.

TREATY DIVISION
OCT 26 1933
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NOV 1 - 1933

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OCT 17 1933
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS
copy in NE

767.74/40

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

767.74

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that Ismet Pasha made it clear, in a public address at the banquet tendered him by the Bulgarian Prime Minister on on the first evening of his visit to Bulgaria from September 21 to September 24, that he and Tewfik Rushdi Bey had come to Sofia in the hopes of inducing Bulgaria to become a party to the recently concluded Greco-Turkish pact, or some similar agreement calculated to guarantee and consolidate peace. This open declaration following immediately upon the measured and uninspired sentences of Mr. Mooshanoff, who had seen fit to welcome his visitors

note 033.6774

767.6812 non-aggression

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with a declaration in support of efforts within the framework of the League of Nations and the Four Power Pact to assure peace, smacked of steam roller tactics to the Bulgarian mind, and confirmed it in the opinion that Bulgaria should have nothing to do with Turkish nostrums, the effects of which could only be to re-affirm the territorial clauses of the Treaty of Neuilly.

So far as I have been able to ascertain from those who participated in the ensuing conversations, and particularly from Mr. Antonoff, the Bulgarian Minister to Turkey, Mr. Mooshanoff did not once waiver from the position that Bulgarian policy must remain firmly anchored to the League of Nations and to the Four Power Pact. He is said to have made it clear to Ismet Pasha that Bulgaria can sign no pact which does not take into consideration (1) that Bulgarian territory in Thrace was ceded to the Allied Powers, and not to Greece, (2) that the French and British delegations to the Paris Peace Conference had agreed with the opinion of the American experts that the Dobrudjan settlement of 1913 was not just to Bulgaria, although the official attitude at the time was that France and England could not give to an enemy a portion of the territory belonging to one of their allies, (3) that Bulgaria had a good case against Yugoslavia with reference to the Western Confines and to the situation of the Bulgarian minority in Macedonia. In other words, revisionism is not to be abandoned by the present Bulgarian Government in the absence of more concrete advantage than that offered by a Greco-Turkish pact or any similar agreement. At the same time it is

supposed

supposed that Mr. Mooshanoff expressed surprise at the Turkish persistence in view of the fact that when he had explained to Tewfik Rushdi Bey last May why Bulgaria could not sign an agreement of mutual guarantee the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs had replied that Turkey would not insist on the project. Perhaps Tewfik Rushdi Bey's acquiesence at that time had been induced by the flattering visit paid him on the train by King Boris just before Mr. Mooshanoff boarded the train in Sofia to give the travelling Turkish statesman Bulgaria's negative reply (see despatch No.680, of June 10, 1933). Nevertheless, so say some of those who participated in last week's conversations, Tewfik Rushdi Bey was sufficiently honest to confirm Mr. Mooshanoff's words when questioned by Ismet Pasha on the point.

767.7411

768.74/313

From the foregoing it would appear that early in the conversations it became clear that the Turks would not carry away with them Bulgaria's signature to any new pact. Ismet's efforts, however, were not entirely in vain as it seems that he was able to convince Mr. Mooshanoff that his motives were of the highest order, that in fact his single desire in coming to Sofia was to work for peace and understanding in Southeastern Europe. Under the circumstances, at least so I have been informed on good authority, Mr. Mooshanoff was not only able to assure Ismet Pasha that Bulgaria has no design on Turkish territory, but that its revisionist claims at the expense of Greece will never be prosecuted in a manner calculated to disturb the peace. Thus, the Turks were given something to communicate to Athens, and in turn they were able to

assure

assure the Bulgarian Government that the Greco-Turkish pact is not directed against it. Assurances on this point from Athens were also communicated to Mr. Mooshanoff during the course of the Turkish visit by Mr. Collas, the Greek Minister to Bulgaria.

So as to give the appearance of more substance, so far as the general public is concerned, to the results of the conversations it was agreed to extend for a further period of five years the Treaty of Neutrality, Conciliation, Arbitration and Judicial Settlement signed by Bulgaria and Turkey on March 6, 1929, although this treaty has still more than a year to run as ratifications were not exchanged until December 3, 1929. In consequence it was possible to issue a somewhat fulsome statement, on the morning of September 23 relative to the conversations. A copy of this official document and a translation thereof are enclosed.

note 767.7412

1-2/

On the same morning the visiting Turks, accompanied by Mr. Mooshanoff and a retinue of Bulgarian officials, were taken by special train to Varna from which port the Turkish delegation departed on board the famous cruiser YAVOUS on September 24, on the afternoon of which day the protocol relative to the prolongation for five years of the treaty of March 6, 1929, was signed (for text of this treaty see Legation's 711.7412 A/21 despatch No.1501, of May 29, 1929).

Viewed from the wider angle of European relations in general it would appear that the visit of Ismet Pasha and Tewfik Rushdi Bey has brought about no material change in the international situation. Bulgaria is still free to profit by the reviving interest of France in a Balkan settlement and by any success that this renewed interest

may

may have at Belgrade. In other words the path of gravitation toward the Little Entente has not been closed, and in this respect the visit would appear to be a setback to what at least has generally been thought to be Italian policy to date in the Balkans. At the same time the Bulgarians appear to have handled their case sufficiently well as not to put an end to Turkish friendship and what may come of it because of Turkey's desire to assure peace in the Eastern Mediterranean and Southeastern Europe.

Respectfully yours,

Maynard B. Barnes,
Charge d'Affaires ad interim.

2 Carbon Copies
Received

L.E.C.

710
MBB:MC

2 Enclosures: Copy of official statement relative to prolongation of Treaty of Neutrality, Conciliation, Arbitration and Judicial Settlement.

Translation of above statement.

Enclosure No. 1 to
despatch No. 753 of
September 29, 1933.

Communiqué.

Le Président du Conseil Ismet Pacha, le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de la République Turque, Tevfik Rustu bey, et la Président du Conseil, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de Bulgarie, M.Mouchanoff, ont passé en revue, au cours de leurs entretiens, toutes les questions intéressant les deux pays et ont examiné la situation générale. Cet échange de vues s'est poursuivi dans une atmosphère de confiance, de franchise et de cordialité. Il a mis encore une fois en évidence la solidarité des intérêts de la Turquie et de la Bulgarie, ainsi que la conformité de leurs vues sur les problèmes touchant les deux pays et la coopération internationale.

Les deux Gouvernements, fermément résolus à continuer à pratiquer une politique de paix et d'entente générale, toujours animés des sentiments d'amitié et d'estime mutuelle qui caractérisent les relations entre les deux peuples et désireux d'en renouveler l'expression, ont décidé de prolonger, dès à présent et pour une nouvelle période de cinq ans, le Traité de neutralité, de conciliation, de règlement judiciaire et d'arbitrage conclu en 1929.

A cette occasion, les deux Gouvernements se sont trouvés d'accord pour souligner que les obligations assumées ou à assumer par l'une ou l'autre des deux parties ne sauraient en aucun cas porter atteinte aux stipulations dudit Traité ou en réduire la portée. Dans cet ordre d'idées, les Ministres turcs ont spontanément déclaré au Gouvernement Bulgare que le Pacte gréco-turc, signé le 14 septembre 1933 à Ankara, n'est dirigé ni contre la Bulgaria ni contre aucun autre pays et ne s'inspire en particulier d'aucune tendance hostile à l'égard de la Bulgarie.

En outre, les deux Gouvernements ont décidé de confier à une commission mixte l'examen et la liquidation, dans le plus bref délai possible, des quelques questions qui se trouvent pendantes entre la Turquie et la Bulgarie.

Sofia, le 22 septembre 1933.

Enclosure No.2 to
despatch No.753 of
September 29, 1933.

Official Statement.

The Prime Minister, Ismet Pasha, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic, Tevfik Rustu Bey, and the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, M.Mooshanoff, have considered in the course of their conversations all questions of mutual interest to the two countries and have examined the general situation. This exchange of views was conducted in an atmosphere of confidence, frankness and cordiality. It has revealed once more the solidarity of the interests of Turkey and Bulgaria and the conformity of their views on the problems touching the two countries and on international cooperation.

The two Governments, firmly determined to continue to follow a policy of peace and general understanding, always animated by the feelings of friendship and mutual esteem which characterize the relations between the two peoples, and desirous of giving expression anew to these sentiments, have decided to prolong from this moment and for a new period of five years the Treaty of neutrality, conciliation, judicial settlement and arbitration concluded in 1929.

On this occasion the two Governments have agreed to emphazize that the obligations assumed or to be assumed by either of the two parties can in no case affect the stipulations of the said Treaty or diminish its significance. In this connection the Turkish Ministers have spontaneously declared to the Bulgarian Government that the Greco-Turkish Pact signed on September 14, 1933 at Ankara is not directed against Bulgaria or any other country and is not inspired by any hostile tendency toward Bulgaria.

Moreover, the two Governments have decided to entrust to a mixed commission the examination and liquidation in the shortest time possible of the several questions pending between Turkey and Bulgaria.

Sofia, September 22, 1933.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74 /41

SEE 76726812 Non-Aggression/3 FOR #541

FROM Turkey (Shaw) DATED Sept.28, 1933

TO NAME

1—1127 o.p.o.

REGARDING: Visit to Bulgaria of Turkish officials in an unsuccessful attempt to obtain Bulgaria's adherence to the Turco-Greek Pact of Friendship and Cooperation.

W1

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sofia, Bulgaria, October 14, 1933.

No.761

SUBJECT: STATEMENTS OF TEWFIK RUSHDI BEY WHEN PASSING THROUGH SOFIA.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NOV 14 1933
DIVISION OF
WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
NOV 13 1933

DIVISION OF
EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
NOV 13 1933
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPT. OF STATE
DIV. COM. & REC.
PM RECD

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY
NOV 8 - 1933
MR BULLITT

Copy to MID

NOV 15 1933

767.74/42

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NOV 2 - 1933
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-C/C
NOV 14 1933
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

NOV 21 1933
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The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my despatch No.759, of October 14, 1933, and to inform the Department that travelling on the same train which brought Mr. Mooshanoff back to Sofia from Paris was Tewfik Rushdi Bey. At Sofia the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs stated to the Bulgarian journalists that during the trip he had had occasion to review once again with Mr. Mooshanoff Bulgaro-Turkish questions and to observe that the friendship between the two countries remains unshaken. He explained that the pacts which Turkey is about to sign with Rumania and Yugoslavia will not be of the same character

as

as the Turko-Greek pact, as Turkey has no common frontier with these states. "With Bulgaria, a limitrophe state, Turkey seeks to conclude an analogous pact with that signed with Greece, and the exchange of views on this subject continue", said the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs. He added that Turkey follows no nefarious plans, that it holds above all to peace and Balkan understanding, that it even wishes that the Balkan frontiers themselves might be suppressed and no animosities divide the states of the peninsula, and that if Bulgaria agrees to accept the pact Turkey is ready to level all frontiers between the two states. In reply to a question as to why M. Titulesco is going to Ankara, Tewfik Ruchdi Bey stated that Rumania and Yugoslavia are entering the category of states with which Turkey has special contractual relations - Bulgaria, Soviet Russia, Italy, Greece, Persia and Hungary. The involved manner in which the reply was given appears to have been calculated to imply that as Turkey has special contractual relations with Bulgaria, Soviet Russia, Italy, Greece and Hungary, it may profit Rumania and Yugoslavia to work for peace via Ankara. After touching on the desirability of personal contacts between political leaders of neighboring states, Tewfik Ruchdi Bey spoke of the question of the resumption of diplomatic relations between Bulgaria and the Soviets. He said that although this was an internal question for Bulgaria, he wished that Bulgaria would regulate it promptly and to its profit. He stated finally that the signature of the Bulgaro-Turkish treaty of commerce is iminent and

that

that Turkey would be pleased to receive Mr. Gitcheff, the Agrarian leader, who is also Minister of Commerce, at Ankara for the signature.

Respectfully yours,

Maynard B. Barnes,
Charge d'Affaires ad interim

710
MBB:MC

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/43

SEE 767.00/52 FOR #51

FROM Turkey (Skinner) DATED Nov.27, 1933

TO NAME 1—1127 GPO

REGARDING: Statement of Turkish Foreign Minister concerning the granting to Bulgaria of an outlet to the Aegean.

43

Wi

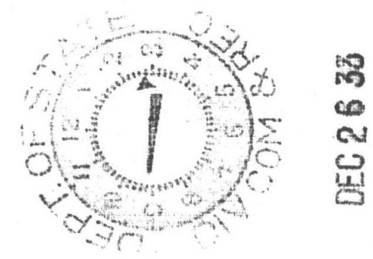
NE

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sofia, Bulgaria, December 8, 1933.

No.790

SUBJECT: TURCO-YUGOSLAV PACT AND RELATED MATTERS.



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STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DEC 27 1933
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

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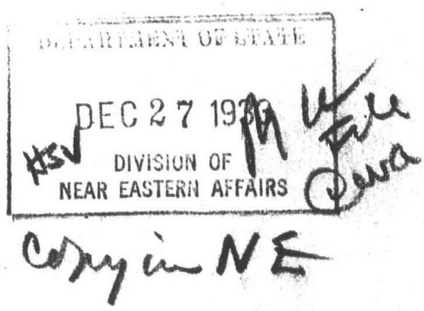

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

The pact of non-aggression, judicial settlement, arbitration and conciliation, between Turkey and Yugoslavia, initialed at Geneva on October 9, and signed at Belgrade by Mr. Yevtitch and Tewfik Ruchdi Bey on November 27, has not provoked hostile comment in the Bulgarian press, although it is generally recognized here that having failed by frontal attack to bring Bulgaria into its orbit, Turkey is now seeking to gain its ends by tactical maneuvers.

This unusual manifestation of restraint on the part of Bulgarian opinion is doubtless to be explained largely

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largely on the ground that France has taken a hand in affairs here, and has told Bulgaria that the fruits of French friendship are to be had in exchange for the assurance that Bulgaria will not join any combination of powers hostile to France. I understand on good authority that this assurance was given when King Boris visited France last summer, at which time it was also agreed that Bulgaria would manifest a desire to cultivate friendly relations with its neighbors in order to facilitate the task of France in fostering legitimate Bulgarian interests. Therein lies to a great extent the explanation of the recent meetings between King Boris and King Alexander and King Boris and King Carol. A further gesture of good neighborliness is soon to be made by a visit of King Boris and his Prime Minister, Mr. Mooshanoff, to Belgrade.

751.74

Thus, Bulgarian opinion can afford to remain calm before the continuing efforts of Turkey to consolidate the status quo in the Balkans. At the same time it would be unnatural, under the circumstances, for Bulgarian opinion to hide completely its discontent with Turkish activity, and there is now an inclination here to ask publicly what is the meaning of all the pacts which Turkey is concluding if it is not that the young politicians of Turkey, and especially Tewfik Ruchdi Bey, flattered by the real progress of Turkey under the wise direction of Mustafa Kemal, seek to play an international role dictated by their ambitions, but for which their capacity is insufficient. If further proof is wanting that Bulgaro-Turkish relations have not prospered

since

since the signature of the Turco-Greek pact and the visit of Ismet Pasha and Tewfik Ruchdi Bey to Sofia, mention need only be made of the fact that the negotiations for a new commercial treaty have not yet been successfully concluded.

In this situation an accusing finger here is covertly pointed at Greece. It is the private opinion of many in the Bulgarian Foreign Office that Turkey has not taken at its true value the Bulgarian explanation of why it is unwilling to enter into an agreement with Turkey guaranteeing the common frontier of the two states because Greece has played on Turkish fears by pointing to sporadic agitations in Bulgaria against Turkey by the Bulgarian emigration from Eastern Thrace. When Tewfik Ruchdi Bey passed through Sofia on November 29, returning to Ankara from Belgrade, Mr. Mooshanoff took occasion to assure the Turkish statesman once again that it is the Bulgarian view that all territorial questions between Bulgaria and Turkey have been settled, and to reiterate his former explanation that Bulgaria is unwilling to sign a pact of territorial guarantee with Turkey only because if such an agreement were in existence Bulgaria would find itself in an embarrassing situation with reference to its other neighbors with which territorial questions are still outstanding.

I have learned on good authority that on this occasion the Prime Minister let it be understood that flanking maneuvers cannot be successful, as Bulgaria is not to be taken by surprise. And it appears that the local journalists, received by Tewfik Ruchid Bey following

the

the interview between him and Mr. Mooshanoff at the Sofia railway station, drove home the latter's warning by asking if it is true that the system of Balkan pacts which Turkey is building up, is directed against Bulgaria. They also asked the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs to explain Turkish anti-revisionism to the Bulgarian public. Tewfik Ruchdi Bey is reported to have replied to the first question that pacts can also be concluded with Bulgaria, granted Bulgaria is willing, and that it is not true that any bloc directed against Bulgaria exists. On the question of Turkish anti-revisionism, the Minister for Foreign Affairs appears to have replied that Turkey seeks the maintenance of the treaties, because, as a satisfied state, it desires to consolidate peace, which it believes can best be accomplished within the framework of the peace treaties. This answer led to the question of "why then insist upon reaffirmation by Bulgaria, especially as there can be no possibility of aggression by feeble and disarmed Bulgaria"? Certain newspapers have reported that Tewfik Ruchdi Bey replied to this question by the vague remark that no one thinks of armed action. According to another published account of the interview the Turkish Minister replied that no one denies Bulgaria the right to insist upon the integral application of the Treaty of Neuilly, and that Turkey will do its utmost at Athens for the execution of the clause guaranteeing Bulgaria an economic "and not a territorial" outlet to the Aegean. But whether Tewfik Ruchdi Bey said this or said that does not seem to be of great moment, especially in view of his reputation for talking too much.

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The important thing is that he has been warned, both by the Prime Minister and by the questions of the Sofia journalists, not to over-play his hand by seeking to subject Bulgaria to pressure. Whether he will take this warning seriously remains to be seen. If he does not he will most assuredly alienate Bulgarian friendship for Turkey, and may thereby facilitate the path to friendship between Sofia and Belgrade, a development which might endow the Turco-Greek pact with considerably more importance than would be to Turkey's liking.

Respectfully yours,

Maynard B. Barnes,
Charge d'Affaires ad interim.

Six Carbon Copies
Requested

JM
LEC

710
MBB:MC

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Istanbul, February 13, 1934.

No. 131.

Subject: The Petrov Letter.

FOR DISTRIBUTION ... No
In U. ...
Legation, Sofia

DEPT. OF STATE
NOV. COM. & REC.
AM. RECD
MAR 7 34

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-C/O
MAR 10 1934
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

767.74

Copy transmitted by the Commercial Office (A-C/O)
To Sofia
3/10/34

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 8 - 1934
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

767.74/45

MAR 12 1934
FILED

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

In its issue of January 19, 1934, the HABER published excerpts from a letter said to have been received during the Bayram holidays from one Petrov, a Bulgarian dental student at Istanbul, who signed himself as a member of the Thracian Committee. I have secured a copy of this newspaper and have had translated all of the letter that was published. The letter reads as follows:

> "We Bulgarians demand the removal of the ... secretaries or else the Thrace Committee will, for the monies (unjustly) taken from us, revenge us at the expense of the Bulgarian Turks.....We shall henceforth publish these injustices in the Sofia press...We know what to do with the Bulgarian Turks in

in Bulgaria as well as with ... (a name scratched out) who is probably acting as your translator (correspondent).

One cannot be friends with the Turks! ... Do not forget that Rüştü Bey went to Belgrade and Athens and signed a pact against us ... and that you denounced G. Mushanoff as a cheat ... But with your dishonest and ..... secretaries, faculties and teachers you are debasing yourself and your university ... as long as you continue to admit the graduates of our priest schools.(?)

While the students of the Turkish University march from Beyazid to Taxim singing songs against the foreign element ... we Bulgarians laugh!....."

The publication of this letter provoked an emotional outburst in Istanbul. At the time, it will be recalled, the Balkan Pact was being worked into final form. The Kings of Rumania and Yugoslavia had exchanged visits; the King of Bulgaria was scheduled to pay soon a state visit to the King of Rumania; the Prime Ministers of the Balkan countries had been going from capital to capital holding conferences; but the Bulgarian Government, regardless of these events and in spite of pressure exerted from many sources, remained hostile to the pact. The publication of the Petrov letter, therefore, coming from a member of the Thracian Committee and showing, as it did, that the Bulgarian nation, like the Government, was hostile to the principles of the Pact, was first-rate political news.

The immediate positive reactions in Turkey to the publication of this letter took several forms. The Anatolian Agency, the official press agency, published a communiqué denying the libelous statements and inferences contained in the Petrov letter. The Bulgarian

students

students attending educational institutions in Turkey wrote, as members of the Bulgarian student organization, to the HAKIMIYETI MILLIYE denying statements attributed to them of having been mistreated. The Istanbul police authorities went to work with a view to bringing to light more information concerning Petrov, his associates in Turkey, and his connection with the Thracian Committee.

The police discovered that Petrov was a pseudonym and that the real name of the author of the Petrov letter was Sabri. Sabri was forthwith arrested. He was hailed before a criminal court and charged with exciting the public through the spreading of false news. This charge, when proven, is punishable under Article 161 of the Penal Code by a fine and sentence of imprisonment. Sabri was brought to trial during the last week of January. It was brought out in the evidence that he was a student enrolled in the Istanbul Dental College; that he was a Bulgarian subject, and that he earned his livelihood by teaching and by writing for several newspapers. Some evidence tended to show that he was slightly unbalanced mentally. At the end of trial he was ordered by the court to pay a fine of 25 Turkish liras and senteneed also to imprisonment for one month.

The Petrov letter and the trial of its author are of interest to a foreign diplomatic officer stationed in Turkey for two reasons: First, the incident again brings into the clear the fact that there exists

xenophobia

xenophobia in Turkey. This subject was discussed at the time of the Wagon-Lits incident a year ago. It suffices here to note that in the interval of time that lapsed between the Wagon-Lits incident and the Petrov letter, it has lost none of its force. Secondly, the attention that the Petrov letter and subsequent developments received from the local press demonstrates the extremes to which Istanbul editors will go when they have a "safe" subject upon which they can vent their pent-up feelings. Sensational news matter, which is printable with immunity, is scarce in Turkey inasmuch as items such as divorce proceedings, intimate details of the private lives of public officials, etc., which in most countries furnish adequate items of this type, are banned here. Therefore, when an occasion such as the present one occurs, the editors exploit its sensational features to the nth degree without letting the facts of the case act in any way as an impediment to the accomplishment of their aims. In the present case, Sabri was shown at the trial to be a harmless, if slightly deranged, school-boy. Nevertheless, local newspaper publishers in large headlines and suggestive news stories made him out as an ultra dangerous individual who threatened the peace on two continents.

Respectfully yours,

Robert P. Skinner

Robert P. Skinner
American Ambassador.

891
BYB:on

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 774.00/74 FOR #862

FROM Bulgaria (Barnes) DATED March 24, 1934

TO NAME 1--1127 GPO

REGARDING: Turkish-Bulgarian relations.
Statement by the Prime Minister that the charge by the Turkish press is untrue: Bulgaria is not giving refuge to enemies of present regime in Turkey.

767.74/ 46

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DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/47

SEE 768.74/328 FOR #190

FROM U.S.S.R. (Bullitt) DATED Oct.2, 1934

TO NAME

1-1127 ers

REGARDING: Bulgaro-Turkish relations.

Conversation with the Bulgarian Minister who stated that Bulgaria was ready to place itself in the position of a "client state" of the Soviet Union in return for which the Soviet Union would endeavor to establish closer relations between Bulgaria and Turkey, the purpose of which is to enlist the aid of Turkey and the Soviet Union in obtaining a Bulgarian outlet to the Aegean Sea.

Wi

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/48

SEE 767.00/58 FOR #413

FROM Turkey (Skinner) DATED Nov.1, 1934

TO

NAME

1—1127 GPO

REGARDING:

Turkish-Bulgarian relations.

Statement of the Foreign Minister concerning -.Possibility that Bulgaria can be induced to join the Balkan Pact.No possibility that Bulgarian ambitions to recover her lost territories will be realized.

48

W4

No.413 Ankara, Turkey, November 1, 1934.

Subject: Views of the Turkish Foreign Minister in Regard to the European Situation.

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362.1164

767.00/58

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that I have had a long conversation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tevfik Rüştü Bey, dealing in the first place with a number of practical matters which will be set forth in other despatches from time to time, and ending in an interesting discussion of a general political nature.

I congratulated the Minister upon his election to membership in the Council of the League of Nations, an election which, I may add, has given immense satisfaction to the Turkish Government. He announced his in-

tention

tention of laboring in season and out of season for the cause of peace, and particularly for the elaboration of some sort of universal arrangement in which the United States could join. He despaired of any effective peace arrangement in which the United States did not participate to the same extent as the important European Powers. I reminded him of the Kellogg Pact, but he remained unconvinced that the Kellogg Pact was sufficiently strong to accomplish its purpose. Finally, he hinted very strongly that he might devise a text of some sort and would pass it on to me for transmission to the Department in order to elicit our informal views. To this I could only say that of course I should be happy to receive anything of this nature at any time, and to communicate it to Washington, but without responsibility except as a transmitting agent.

We had quite a conversation about Germany, the Foreign Minister repeating several times that the European situation could not be brought under effective control without Germany as an active member in the concert, whatever it might prove to be. He was strongly of the opinion that Hitler had made tremendous mistakes from his own point of view, that he was weaker internally than he had been, and that the army had become the strong factor in German affairs.

I asked him how he could account for the extraordinary war scare which has passed through Turkey during

during the last month or so, a scare so real that many people have been expecting to hear that war was declared from day to day. He replied vaguely that war was in the atmosphere,and Turkey being vulnerable it was not at all surprising that there should be recurring waves of popular excitement. As to the actual situation, he did not see how Italy could possibly precipitate an attack upon Turkey as there were no grounds for such an undertaking other than the generally recognized ambitions of Italy to possess territory in Asia Minor. Undoubtedly Mr. Mussolini had contributed to the state of mind in Turkey by his speech about expansion a short time ago. "We do not fear Italy," said he, "but we do not like her fortifications on the islands." In this Dr. Tevfik Rüştü Bey was only repeating what I have heard from many others in Turkey — that the fortification of the islands could only be intended to facilitate some ultimate operation against Turkey.

As respects Bulgaria, the Minister for Foreign Affairs seemed to be convinced that her intentions with respect to Turkey were friendly - certainly far from belligerent, and he was hopeful that Bulgaria would eventually come into the Balkan Agreement, an end to which all the other Balkan Powers had set their minds. There was no possibility that Bulgarian ambitions to recover her lost territories could be satisfied, as even if the Powers concerned were prepared to consent, it would open up the question of frontiers all over Europe, and only increase international difficulties.

He

He spoke very reasonably, it seemed to me, about Turkey as having herself lost more territory as a result of the war than any other Power, notwithstanding which, she accepted the situation philosophically, giving an example in this respect to other States which refuse to be reconciled. After all, he suggested, war is a terrible experience and those who lose must learn how to adapt themselves to the consequences, and that is exactly what Turkey has done.

The closing of the American International College at Izmir was mentioned, and Dr. Tevfik Rüştü Bey offered the personal opinion that the Turkish Government should acquire the property on reasonable terms, assuming it to be for sale, and utilize it for Turkish school purposes. He spoke of the Catholic schools, supported by France and Italy, with a good deal of warmth. These schools are pretty well limited now to Istanbul. I gathered that his objections were chiefly because of his belief that the schools were intended to keep alive a national spirit among young people born in Turkey whose families have been here for generations, more often than not, and who would become Turkish citizens but for the official efforts put forth to keep alive their French or Italian citizenship.

Respectfully yours,

Robert P. Skinner.

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RPS/lr

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 441 Istanbul, Turkey, November 17, 1934.

Subject: The Turkish Foreign Minister on Relations with Bulgaria.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
1934 DEC 17 AM 11 36
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK Yes No
To the Field
In U. S. A.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-P/O
DEC 18 1934
H
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

767.74

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DEC 18 1934
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Sir:

The Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tevfik Rüştü Bey, left Istanbul a day or two ago for Geneva, and paused in Sofia long enough to receive the journalists at that capital, as result of which, the CUMHURIYET, one of the principal newspapers of Istanbul, quotes him as making the following declaration:

> "The decisions taken at Ankara by the Council of the Balkan Entente are of such nature as to satisfy all the Balkan States. Mr. Titulescu has already told you about the action decided upon. With regard to the news published by

767.74/49
FILED
DEC 24 1934

published by certain journals, according to which the Council (of the Balkan Entente) had envisaged the question of granting the outlet upon the Aegean Sea to Bulgaria, I can say to you that this question was not even raised. As to the problem of our relations with you, you are aware that they are very good. However, as you continue to speak of the question of Thrace, it must not astonish you that our people are thereby irritated. We wish to live on good terms with you. We have said it more than once. Nevertheless, our friendship with you must not prejudice our relations with Greece. This will never be the case, understand it well. We wish for no friendship susceptible of damaging our friendship with our other neighbors. Our policy is to be friends with all our neighbors, and I beg of you not to fail to set this down in your journals."

Whether or not this rather brusque language will be found palatable in Bulgaria remains to be seen, but it is certainly in line with all that the Turkish Foreign Minister has said heretofore and probably it will be a very good thing for the Bulgarians to know that there is no present possibility that they can obtain their coveted outlet upon the Aegean. As soon as that is understood and accepted at Sofia, it will become possible for Bulgaria to join with the other Balkan States in the existing understanding.

It will be interesting to know just how much or how little of the above quoted statement as given in the Turkish press was reproduced in the press of Sofia.

Respectfully yours,

Robert P. Skinner.

Robert P. Skinner.

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RPS/lr

Copy to Amlegation, Sofia.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 768.7415/45 FOR #469

FROM Turkey (Skinner) DATED Dec. 10, 1934

TO NAME 1—1127 ...

767.74/50

REGARDING: Turkish-Bulgarian relations.
Comments on criticism in Turkish press of the killing of five members of the band of Pomaks by Bulgarian frontier guards, Nov. 29 which created the impression that the Pomaks were Turks residing in Bulgaria.

1ec

No. 469 Istanbul, Turkey, December 10, 1934.

Subject: The Bulgarian Frontier Incident.

768.74/45

767.74

Confidential

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

Sir:

Doubtless it has been noted in the Department that on the morning of November 29th, 1934, on the Greek-Bulgarian frontier an incident occurred which led to the killing of five members of a band of Pomaks by Bulgarian frontier guards and the capture of a number of others. The Pomaks are understood to be Rumelians living in Bulgaria since a number of centuries and who, on taking up their residence in that land, adopted the Moslem faith. It is not supposed that they are Turks by blood or breeding,

and

and scarcely by religion, inasmuch as official Turkey has abandoned Islam. The Pomaks in question were said to be fleeing with stolen cattle at a point south of Djovlem, and were followed into Greek territory to a depth of about 1,500 kilometers, due, as was explained, to the heavy fog prevailing at the time.

The incident itself, however distressing in its personal aspects, was not one of great importance, nor indeed unusual in this part of the world. It is said that Greece has accepted Bulgarian explanations and that the incident is closed as between the two countries immediately concerned. It was a remarkable fact, however, that no sooner were the circumstances made known in Turkey than there arose an extraordinary amount of irrelevant criticism in the press, of which Bulgaria became the victim. This publicity created the impression, in the first instance, that the Pomaks were Turks residing in Bulgaria and was out of proportion to the incident itself.

Confidential.

I have been told that the Turkish press received instructions from the Press Bureau at Ankara to treat the affair savagely, and the press undoubtedly responded to the invitation. The precise object sought to be obtained by thus making a mountain out of a mole hill is difficult to surmise, unless back of it lay the thought that an embitterment of relations between Greece and Bulgaria accompanied by hostile allusions in Turkey might conceivably remind Bulgaria

that

that she stood alone in the Balkans and perhaps encourage her to sign the Balkan Pact. The theory is rather difficult to accept, but the fact proves once again with what ease a small affair like cattle-thieving may be expanded into a political incident of the first class in this region.

As a sample of what the Turkish press has said about the killing of the Pomaks I quote merely a few sentences from LA RÉPUBLIQUE:

> "The act of the Bulgars, massacring nine kilometers beyond their frontier five Turks who were fleeing like sheep escaping from a slaughter house is no small thing ... acts which do not differ from those of bandits deliberately treading on the national dignity of another country. ... Greece has already commenced and will continue to have recourse to all measures which are imposed on her by such a cowardly attack ... Bulgarian bumptiousness constitutes an affront to the Entente Balkanique. ... Truly, if today it is Greece that is attacked, tomorrow it will be the turn of the others ... a Government which shows such indifference in the presence of spilled blood is not and never will be a Government that honors humanity. ... Bulgaria ought to be compelled to make full reparation. ... It is necessary to have Bulgaria engage formally and with specific guarantees never in the future to exercise any injuries on the minorities dwelling within her borders."

Respectfully yours,

Robert P. Skinner.

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RPS:lr

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 11 1935
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

FS

1—1236

GRAY

FROM Geneva

Dated March 9, 1935

Rec'd 10:20 a.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 9 1935

Secretary of State,

Washington.

69, March 9, 1 p.m.

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767.74/51

FILED

MAR 12 1935

On March 7, the Bulgarian delegate handed a note to the Secretary-General alleging concentration of Turkish military forces in Eastern Thrace during the past year which has been intensified during recent months accompanied by suspension of all leaves of officers and men and by active propaganda against Bulgaria. He likewise immediately gave out text of the note to the press. Bulgarian note does not invoke covenant nor request any League action.

Thereupon Turkish delegate made a statement to the press expressing surprise at the Bulgarian demarche particularly at the present juncture and stating that neither Turkey nor any other of Bulgaris's neighbors has belligerent or unfriendly feelings toward that country. Declaration adds, however, that Turkey, being firmly attached to the status quo in the Balkans, could not regard with indifference military precautions recently taken by Bulgaria

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on the

on the Greek frontier. Nevertheless no members of the Balkan Entente could be accused of belligerent intentions since the purpose of the Balkan Pact is to maintain status quo. He expresses the hope that Bulgaria would some day be a member of the Balkan Entente.

Competent Secretariat officials stated that Turkey has not addressed written communication to League but that both Bulgarian and Turkish representatives have conferred with Secretary General. I understand, however, that they merely repeated in effect what they have given to the press. Secretariat officials appear to have no clear understanding of the motives behind the Bulgarian demarche which they regard as very hasty and are inclined to attribute to some internal political reason. Although apprehensive regarding the whole situation created by conditions in Greece they are at present inclined to the opinion that this particular incident affords no immediate cause for concern.

In view of the circumstance that no action on the part of the League has been requested Secretary General is merely communicating Bulgarian note to League members.

HPD BLAKE

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FS

GRAY

1—1236

FROM Sofia

Dated March 9, 1935

Rec'd 11:30 a.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 11 1935
DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State,

Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 9 - 1935
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

7, March 9, 11 a.m.

In an interview yesterday the Foreign Minister informed that his government had called the attention of the League of Nations, as a matter of record, to the concentration of Turkish troops along the Bulgarian frontier and the unfriendly campaign of the Turkish press during the past year which, in spite of repeated protests, continued and which the Bulgarian Government were at a loss to understand.

He further stated that no mobilization had taken place or would take place in Bulgaria, first, because of their resolute attachment to peace and firm determination to maintain it and, second, from a realistic point of view because the military establishment was so limited under treaty provisions it would be impossible for Bulgaria to take any than defensive measures. Bulgaria relied on the League of Nations and had brought to its attention the Turkish action only in order that the League might be advis

in advance

767.74/52

FILED
MAR 14 1935

FS 2-No. 7, March 9, from Sofia

in advance of a situation which might become serious later.

WWC STERLING

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/53

53

SEE 874.00/513 FOR #44

FROM Near Eastern Div. (Murray) DATED Feb.12, 1935

TO NAME

1—1127

REGARDING:

Relations between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

Statement of the Bulgarian Charge that he was unable to understand the strained relations between the two countries and inquiry of Mr. Murray as to whether this could not be attributed to resistance of the Bulgarians to attempts of the Turks to induce Bulgaria to enter the Balkan Entente.

Wi

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

March 8, 1935

MAR 18 1935
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

THE UNDERSECRETARY
MAR 16 1935
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

NOTED
SECRETARY OF STATE
MAR 16 1935

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 16 1935
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Mr. Phillips

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note
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According to press reports the Bulgarian Delegate to the League of Nations yesterday handed to the Secretary General of the League an aide memoire charging that Turkey is concentrating military forces along its frontier with Bulgaria to such a degree as to arouse the apprehension of the Bulgarian Government.

868.00/765

On March 5 our Minister at Sofia telegraphed that the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs had issued a statement that in view of the Greek insurgent movement in Thrace and Macedonia and points near the Bulgarian frontier the Bulgarian Government had ordered troops from the interior to strengthen the frontier posts. At the same time the Foreign Minister stressed Bulgaria's attachment to peace and stated that he was informed that the Turkish Government was likewise sending troops to its frontier area.

In view of the reported action by the Bulgarian Delegate at Geneva it now looks as if the Bulgarians are probably making of the situation in Greece a pretext to strengthen their Turkish frontier posts because of the movement of Turkish troops. This movement seems to have been going on quietly

FILED
MAR 18 1935

quietly for some time, and likewise does not therefore seem to have been motivated primarily by developments in Greece.

According to the press reports the Turkish representative at Geneva has sought to explain the movement of Turkish troops on the grounds of alleged military measures along the frontier by Bulgaria and the fact that Turkey is a party to the Balkan Entente and committed with Greece to the mutual defense of their common frontier. In other words, an effort appears to be under way to picture Bulgaria as a bellicose state seeking to take advantage of any situation that may arise to regain her lost outlet to the Aegean. In view of the overwhelming odds against her in the way of military strength this picture is highly unconvincing. Turkish motives are therefore something of a mystery.

In connection with this situation the following excerpt 867.9111/427 from despatch No. 523, of January 22, 1935, from our Ambassador to Turkey is interesting:

> "The ZAMAN raises a disturbing question by its continued discussions of the importance of Thrace to Turkey; and now remarks that 'We have the right to claim from the Bulgarians those territories once unjustly torn from Thrace. Moreover, the region of Philibe presents no military or economic value to Bulgaria. It is necessary, therefore, that these territories should be returned to us in a more or less distant future.' Again: 'We do not doubt that ""Greater Thrace"" will become an ideal for the Turks within a year at the latest.' Thus far no interesting

interesting echoes of this claim have been heard from responsible quarters."

It should also be recorded here that Article I of the Convention respecting the Thracian frontier, appended to the Lausanne Treaty of July 24, 1923, provides that the territories extending on both sides of the frontiers separating Turkey from Bulgaria and from Greece shall be demilitarized, with certain minor exceptions, to a depth of about thirty kilometers. Within the respective Turkish, Greek and Bulgarian zones only gendarmerie, police, custom officers, and frontier guards necessary for insuring internal order and the supervision of the frontiers (numbers specified in the convention) shall be stationed or move in the zones.

Wallace Murray

NE MBB/LVD

As Greek loyalists and rebels battle in Thrace, governments of near-by Bulgaria and Turkey watch the Greek border with fear of war. The map indicates the islands of Chios and Samos, near Smyrna, Turkey, where rebels were victorious yesterday. Piraeus, threatened by rebel battleship guns, is indicated by arrow near Athens.

New York Times

MAR 8 1935

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767.74/55

BULGARIA CHARGES TURKS MENACE HER

Tells League Six Divisions Are Concentrated Along the Frontier in Thrace.

SAYS PEOPLE ARE INCITED

No Denial Made as to Arming, but Turkey Asserts She Wants the Status Quo.

By CLARENCE K. STREIT.
Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

Geneva, March 7.—Bulgaria's delegate to the League of Nations, M. Antonoff, handed to Joseph Avenol, Secretary General, an aide memoire this evening charging Turkey had concentrated six divisions in European Turkey near Bulgaria's frontier, was making feverish preparations for war and was inciting the population against Bulgaria without cause.

This serious move in Geneva was professedly made by Bulgaria purely for M. Avenol's information, for no action was requested, not even that of circulating the charges to the League Council. On this ground the League refused to give out the text, but M. Antonoff himself gave it to the pressward.

The Turkish delegate to the League, Cemal Husnu, then conferred with M. Avenol and later with the Soviet Under-Secretary General of the League, Marcel Rosenberg.

Turkey's Answer.

Husnu gave the press a statement tonight denying that Turkey had any unfriendly intention against Bulgaria but hinting darkly that today's move was connected with the Greek revolt and charging Bulgaria with taking military measures along the Greek frontier, to which Turkey, as Greece's ally, could not remain indifferent. He said Turkey was determined to maintain the Balkan status quo in any circumstances.

quo guaranteed by the Balkan Entente.

"The Bulgarian demarche will not cause us to swerve our line of conduct, inspired by a desire to see one day Bulgaria herself become a member of the Balkan pact. One cannot speak seriously of a bellicose intention of any member of this entente, since the very essence of our pact is to maintain the status quo in the Balkans."

It may be noted that there is no denial of the detailed charges made by Bulgaria regarding military preparations. If these charges are true, more than a fourth of the Turkish army is now concentrated in Europe, or at least twice as many troops as the entire Bulgarian army of 20,000 men.

There is skepticism in some well-informed circles here that either Turkey is really preparing to invade Bulgaria or that Bulgaria, as the Turks hint, is only waiting for a favorable development in the Greek revolt to permit her to regain the Aegean seaboard. They think today's manoeuvring is more diplomatic than military, but they do not deny its importance.

Neither delegate seemed to remember that Turkey now holds the presidency of the League Council. There will be on League action unless some power asks for it.

Balkan and Little Entente circles here have been charging since the outbreak of the Greek revolt that Italy is backing Eleutherios Venizelos with a view to swinging Greece away from the Balkan Entente to an alliance with Italy. Such a change of Greek policy would, of course, greatly weaken the Entente and strengthen Bulgaria, for it would cut off Yugoslavia from Turkey.

The Balkan Entente is of great importance in the French system, being the only one with automatic military backing. The concentration against which Bulgaria complains, however, cannot be due only to the revolt, for it began long before.

The Bulgarian aide memoire begins:

"Since a year ago—that is, since the conclusion of the Balkan pact—the Turkish Government has undertaken complete reorganization of its military forces."

The result, it continues, is that to the normal military establishment in European Turkey, consisting of two infantry and one cavalry divisions, were added last year two more divisions and 500 cannons. To Bulgaria's queries Turkey answered that this was only to protect the Dardanelles. Since January, however, the note says, a sixth division has been sent to European Turkey. The rest of the note reads:

"All towns and villages along the Bulgarian frontier are packed with troops and artillery. Additionally, guns and cartridges have been distributed to the peasants; munitions depots are being established in all these localities. And generally there is feverish activity through the province as on the eve of war.

Reservists Mobilized.

"The Turkish Government, judging thes measures insufficient, ordered mobilization of Thracian reservists for March 1, and as these reservists were too few in number because of the sparse population it has added 24,000 recruits from Constantinople [Istanbul] and Asia Minor.

"At Adrianople the authorities have begun recruiting irregular bands which, under the command of disguised officers, are destined to operate in Bulgaria in the event of hostilities soon.

"In all this region leave permits for soldiers and officers have been completely suspended, and there is intensive agitation as much among troops as among the civil population, which is being incited against Bulgars with open talk of a Turkish offensive being ready to occupy in twenty-four hours Southern Bulgaria.

"There is no less intense propaganda in the Turkish press against Bulgaria, which has done nothing to provoke this explosion of hostility."

Bulgaria Is Uneasy.

SOFIA, Bulgaria, March 7.—Turkish troop movements near the Bulgarian border and violent attacks on Bulgaria by the Turkish press have aroused great anxiety in all circles here, and the capital tonight awaited the outcome of Bulgaria's protest today to the League of Nations.

Fears re md more acute by the fact that recent events in Greece cannot explain the Turkish troop movements, it is asserted, since they have been going on for a year, while the Turkish press speaks unceasingly of Turkey's need for parts of Bulgaria's eastern territory.

As typical of the articles that upset the Bulgarians is cited one that appeared in a recent issue of the Turkish newspaper Zaman, saying that Bulgaria should cede part of her territory to Turkey, "so that Adrianople can live."

"If yoy do not bow to this necessity now," the editorial said, "you will have to do it later."

The Turkish statement reads:

"The demarche made by the Bulgarian delegate to the League Secretary General and the explanations furnished to the press by Bulgarian circles have been received with surprise by official Turkish circles in Geneva. Bulgaria is surely convince dthat neither Turkey nor any of her neighbors can have an unfriendly, let alone a bellicose, attitude to her.

Cites the Greek Revolt.

"Turkey's polic yto her neighbors is too well known to need to be explained now. The object of the Bulgarian demarche and press explanations today has, it seems, no connection with the unhappy events taking place in a neighboring and friendly country, but it is no less true that this demarche has been made precisely while these events are taking place, without awaiting their dénouement.

"It is also known that Bulgaria has taken, and is continuing to take, military measures along the Greek frontier. Turkey, as a party to the Balkan Entente and Greco-Turk Entente Cordiale, could not remain indifferent to these measures. Turkey is firmly attached in any circumstances to the status

161.14

CHARGE SLIP

File No. ~~832.51~~

Enclosure	Charge to—	Date	Clerk's initials	Remarks
	~~DRE-Lansing~~	~~3/6/47~~	~~MM~~	
~~1048-1083~~	~~RE - Beers~~	~~2/6-44~~	~~BBS~~	~~FW 1049, FW 1050~~
56	RE - SaMras	9/2-'41	BRa	

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1433

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/57

SEE 868.00/817 FOR #127

FROM Bulgaria (Sterling) DATED Mar.12, 1935

TO NAME

1—1127

REGARDING: Concentration of Turkish forces on the Bulgarian frontier.

Comments on - and the Turkish press campaign against Bulgaria. Presentation of communication to the League on the matter by the Bulgarian delegate, Antonoff, seems to have been a blunder and Antonoff may be recalled.

57

No. 127 Sofia, March 12, 1935

Subject: Bulgarian action in connection with the Greek insurrection.

868.00/817

767.74

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my telegrams Nos. 6 and 7, dated March 5, 6 p.m. and March 9, 11 a.m., respectively, concerning the action of the Bulgarian Government, arising out of the situation in Greece, in strengthening their military posts along the Greek frontiers; and, as well, in regard to the "demarche" of the Government to the League of Nations, through the Bulgarian delegate at Geneva, M. Antonoff, advising it of.....

of the action of Turkey in sending troops to the Bulgarian frontier and of other seemingly unfriendly acts.

There is but little comment to be made to supplement my telegrams. As regards Bulgaria's reinforcing her frontiers on the Greek boundary, public opinion and the local press have been unanimous in approval. The Greek Minister here, while naturally making enquiries in the matter of the Bulgarian Government, has not been disturbed. The Paris "Temps" has pointed out Bulgaria's friendly relations to Greece and stated that the latter had nothing to fear from her neighbor. On March 9th the London "Times" commented in a leading article: "The measures of precaution taken by Bulgaria at the Greek frontier seem to be fairly reasonable after the entry of Pangalos in the valley of the Strouma in 1925. The Greek Government would certainly be prompt in protesting if Bulgaria left its frontier open to the entry of the insurgents and if she failed to disarm the refugees." Regarding Turkey's concentration of troops in eastern Thrace, it continued: "The concentration of Turkish troops in eastern Thrace is more important. The Turkish explanation that it is a measure of protection is not entirely adequate. The great Turkish army, now encamped between Istanbul and the Maritza, could not have been assembled during the week following the hostilities. Taking into consideration the fact that Bulgaria is surrounded by four greater and better armed neighbors, the measures of the Turkish Government, which are explained by events in Greece, are so out of proportion to the requirements of the situation that one can believe that Turkey has other aims. The action of Turkey has increased for the moment the anxiety of the friends and neighbors of Greece."

The most.....

The most unfriendly press campaign which has been waged in Turkey against Bulgaria for the past year seems to this Government quite inexplicable. In my recent interview with M. Bateloff he stated, with obvious honesty, that he was at a loss to understand it, as he was unaware of any action by Bulgaria which could offend Turkish sensibilities. In this connection Mr. Skinner's despatch to the Department, No. 469, dated December 10, 1934, is of interest. He, also, was unable to fathom the cause underlying the bitter newspaper attacks. Possibly the Turkish Foreign Minister, the prime mover in effecting the Balkan Pact, is under the erroneous impression that he can thus force Bulgaria to join. Certainly, in the opinion of the Legation, Bulgarian treatment of minorities within her borders has been as lenient, if not more so, than in other Balkan countries.

Regarding the Bulgarian "demarche" at Geneva, there seems to have been a blunder made by M. Antonoff, M. Bateloff's instructions were simply to call the attention of the League, in not too formal a manner, to the unwarranted concentration of Turkish troops in eastern Thrace towards the Bulgarian frontier, to the Turkish press campaign, and her general unfriendly attitude towards Bulgaria, -- this, only in order that the League might be advised in advance of a situation which might later become serious. Instead, M. Antonoff apparently went much further, making "representations" and leaving with M. Avenol an "aide-memoire". It is now announced that M. Antonoff has addressed a letter to M. Avenol stating that his Government, having received required assurances, considers the communication of the "aide-memoire" to have been unnecessary. It will not be surprising if at some later date M. Antonoff were recalled from Geneva.

I beg to enclose translations of the communiqué issued by M. Batoloff to the foreign press correspondents on March 5, and of the declaration of General Zhivkoff on March 6.

Respectfully yours,

F. A. Sterling

File 800
FAS/MM

Copies to Istanbul
and Athens.

STATEMENTS MADE BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS, MARCH 5, 1935.

The events in Greece.

The events which are taking place in Greece in the last few days and the centre of which is moving, as it seems, toward Eastern Macedonia and Greek Thrace, an area close to the Bulgarian frontier, represent an interest for the Bulgarian Government inasmuch as they endanger peace in the Balkans. Bulgaria is resolutely attached to peace and good relations with her neighbors and has no desire of utilizing or increasing their difficulties. This, however, does not relieve her from the obligation to increase her watchfulness on the frontier and to strengthen its protection by sending troups from the interior. These measures are of a purely defensive and preventive character and are in keeping with international law.

I have charged our Minister to Athens, Mr. Neykoff, to make a declaration in that sense to the Greek Government and I have given personally the same assurances to the Greek representative in Sofia, Mr. Kolas.

Relations with Turkey.

Between Bulgaria and Turkey there is a treaty of friendship. As the Prime Minister stated in his public speech this treaty is not an empty form for us. It is being executed by us with the greatest care and loyalty. There is no reason why we should modify our attitude toward Turkey. I have declared it many times and I am going to repeat it now: Bulgaria desires to live on terms of peace and friendship with all her neighbors and has no reason to provoke anybody. I cannot understand, therefore, the reason of the recent measures taken by the Turkish Government. I hope that these measures, if they have actually been taken, are not directed against us, because, I repeat it, we have not given any cause for them.

You follow the Bulgarian and the foreign press and you have noticed that a part of the Turkish press is taking an unfriendly attitude toward us, whereas the Bulgarian papers do not reciprocate and abstain from any argument which might create an unfriendly atmosphere between the two countries. The only Bulgarian publication to which the Turcs refer in order to justify their unfriendly tone toward Bulgaria, is the paper TRAKIA. This paper, which is far from having here the significance which is being attributed to it in Turkey, has been suspended.

I hope that the Turkish Government whose wisdom and political experience I deeply appreciate will understand the good will of the Bulgarian Government and will do their best to stop the campaign of the Turkish press against us.

PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENTS, MARCH 8, 1935.

ZORA.- "In connection with the rumours spread abroad concerning the mobilization of two military classes in Bulgaria, I wish to declare as Minister of War and as Prime Minister that these rumours are absolutely unfounded. Not only have we not mobilized and have no intention of doing so, but we cannot mobilize because we have no classes and because the limited armaments which the treaties have imposed and with which we strictly comply do not allow us even to think of not living up to our solemn declaration that "we stand for peace and sincere understanding and friendship with all our neighbors and that we will not break peace, no matter what happens in the territory of any state." We have made this declaration on many occasions and we wish to repeat and emphasize it once more. This is the standpoint and the firm determination not only of the Government but of the entire Bulgarian nation without exception. We are a member of the League of Nations, we believe in it, we never will disregard its statutes, and we rely upon it. Every year in fall and winter we send back periodically to their homes a large part of such troops as we are allowed under the treaties. Beginning March 10th the leave of a number of these soldiers was cancelled and they will take the place of those sent to the Greek frontier for its protection and to strengthen the small posts of 4-5 which scattered along the frontier at a distance of 4, 5, 8 and 10 klm. apart and which cannot insure a proper protection of the frontier now that the snow is melting."

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/58

SEE 768.74/340 FOR #560

FROM Greece (MacVeagh) DATED Mar.7, 1935

TO NAME 1—1127

REGARDING:

Importance of Thrace to Bulgaria.

Quotes article which appeared in the NATION ET POLITIQUE concerning -.

58

Wi

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

159

767.74/59

SEE 767.00/60 FOR #580

FROM Turkey (Skinner) DATED Mar.15, 1935

TO NAME

1—1127

REGARDING: Fortification of the Turkish-Bulgarian frontier.

Statement of the Turkish Foreign Minister that discussion of - at Geneva has cleared the air and that Bulgaria now realizes that any increase in her forces along the Thracian border will be met by ten times their strength on the Turkish side.

Wi

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

160

767.74/60

SEE 868.00/826 FOR #132

FROM Bulgaria (Sterling) DATED Mar.26, 1935

TO NAME 1—1127

REGARDING:

Turkish concentration of troops and military preparations on the Bulgarian frontier.

Bulgarian anxiety at -.

Wi

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Istanbul, Turkey, August 27, 1935.

No. 755

Subject: Attacks against Bulgaria in the Turkish Press.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-C/O
SEP 20 1935
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
OCT 1 - 1935
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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In U. S. A.
M.I.D.

SEP 21 1935

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CONFIDENTIAL

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

Sir:

Foreign offices are often places where traditional habits of thought are the rule and the recognition of new facts the exception. Has the Department, for instance, sufficiently abandoned the pre-war idea of Turkey and the Balkans as centers of international complications and discord to grasp the fact that the foreign policy of Turkey for twelve years has been effectively and practically pacifist? One may laugh at Turkey's energetic and talkative Foreign Minister, Dr. Aras, but how many Foreign Ministers of the past decade can look back upon such a consistent record of positive accomplishments in the field of international understanding

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767.74/61
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OCT 5 - 1935

understanding and pacification?

With Bulgaria alone Dr. Aras' pacifist offensive has so far proved unavailing, presumably because Bulgaria is the only one of Turkey's neighbors that is dissatisfied with her existing boundaries and is therefore thought of as a potentially fertile field for the intrigue of one or other of the Western European Powers. In the face of this delicate problem the Turkish press has not played a helpful role. Recently, there has been an epidemic of anti-Bulgarian articles in one or two Turkish papers. Bulgaria has been bitterly criticised for the ceremonies recently held at Varna in connection with the dedication of a monument to the memory of King Wladislaus III of Poland and Hungary who was killed in 1444 in a battle with the Turks. A particularly bitter article against Bulgaria written by Yunus Nadi, a Deputy and a person of some consequence, appeared in the CUMHURIYET on August 3rd. In this article the possibility of war between the two countries was raised in crude and offensive terms. The Bulgarian Minister complained to Dr. Aras who naturally disclaimed all knowledge of the article, ridiculed its sentiments and finally, at the Minister's request, agreed to issue a friendly statement as he passes through Sofia this week en route to Geneva. The statement will be timely since the anti-Bulgarian newspaper articles coincide with the holding of Turkish military manoeuvres in Thrace on a larger scale than usual and with the Chief of Staff himself in attendance, and also with

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the

the nomination of the very capable and energetic Vali of Izmir, Kâzim Dirik, as Inspector General for Thrace. The importance Turkey nowadays obviously gives to Thrace, which for some time had been treated rather as a stepchild in comparison with Anatolia, lends itself to misunderstanding on the other side of the frontier. At the same time Atatürk is said to have a sentimental attachment for Bulgaria dating from the time of his stay in Sofia as Turkish Military Attaché; Dr. Aras, I am convinced, has by no means given up the hope of bringing Bulgaria into the Balkan Entente and the Bulgarian Minister, Mr. Pavloff, is a sensible diplomat educated in Turkey and understanding thoroughly Turkish psychology. I do not believe, therefore, that Turkish-Bulgarian relations will be allowed to get out of hand.

Respectfully yours,

G. Howland Shaw.

G. Howland Shaw
Chargé d'Affaires ad interim.

4 Carbon copy
Received

710.891
GHS:er

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 180 Sofia, September 26, 1935

Subject: Turkish-Bulgarian relations.

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OCT 28 1935
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

868.06/817

I have the honor to refer to the Legation's despatches No. 127 of March 12 and No. 132 of March 26, 1935, which discussed, inter alia, the unfriendly attitude of Turkey toward Bulgaria and the anti-Bulgarian campaign in the Turkish press, and to inform the Department that, contrary to the expectations of the Bulgarian Government, this situation has not improved since the appointment of a new Bulgarian Minister to Ankara. During the last several months

articles....

articles in various Turkish newspapers have indicated increased irritability and the observance in Bulgaria, modest as it has been, of the fiftieth anniversary of the Union of Eastern Roumelia with the Principality, has been the occasion of many unfriendly comments.

It is considered here that in Turkey where the press is strictly controlled, the articles published -- some in semi-official newspapers -- cannot reflect only the personal opinions of the authors. As mentioned in the despatches referred to above, the few comments on the Turkish agitation which have appeared in the local press have been very moderate in tone. The Government and public opinion are, however, very concerned, the more so because of the recent report of a suggestion in the Turkish press that for its security Turkey should occupy certain strategical points on the Turkish-Bulgarian frontier.

Bulgarian officials as well as informed public opinion find it difficult to explain the hostility of Turkey but are inclined to attribute it to the refusal of Bulgaria to adhere to the Balkan Pact and to the constant progress of the rapprochement with Yugoslavia. As the concentration of Turkish troops in Thrace continues and as it appears that that province is being organized as a highly militarized zone, it has also been suggested that the Turkish press campaign is designed to justify these military preparations which perhaps are not directed against Bulgaria but which are rather connected with the

fortification.....

fortification of the Straits. To many this indicates that Soviet Russia may be supporting and encouraging Turkey's attitude towards Bulgaria.

The question of Turkish emigration from Bulgaria has also been the subject of discussion in Turkey. Turkish agents have been very active among Turks residing in Bulgaria, many of whom have been induced to agree to emigrate to Turkey. Their departure, to the irritation of the Turks, has been retarded by Bulgarian restrictions on the export of capital and goods. The Bulgarian Government has no intention of prohibiting this emigration, but for obvious economic reasons desires it to proceed more slowly. In a recent statement to a Turkish press correspondent, Mr. Kiosseivanoff stated that an equitable solution of the question would be found and that bases for negotiations between the two governments were being prepared.

As further indicating the Government's desire to appease Turkish sensibilities and to dispel suspicion as to Bulgarian territorial aspirations in Thrace, a minor official of the Foreign Office who some eighteen months ago published a pamphlet on the necessity for Bulgaria of an outlet on the Aegean has been dismissed and, by the request of the Government, a meeting of reserve officers which was to have been held recently at Kirdjali near the Thracian frontier has been postponed.

The situation was discussed by Mr. Kiosseivanoff and Mr. Tewfik Aras when the latter passed through Sofia August 30 on his way to Bled. After meeting Mr. Tewfik

Aras.....

Aras at the Sofia station Mr. Kiosseivanoff accompanied the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Yugoslav frontier. No doubt Turkish-Bulgarian relations were thoroughly gone into as after the meeting a joint statement was given to the press (translation attached), and both Ministers verbally expressed the desire of their governments and people to live on terms of peace and friendship.

Respectfully yours,

John McArdle
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

Enclosure:
Translation of joint statement by Bulgarian and Turkish Foreign Ministers.

File 710
McA/MM

Copy to Embassy, Istanbul.

No. 1 ACCOMPANYING
DESPATCH No. 180 OF Sept. 26 1935
LEGATION, SOFIA.

JOINT DECLARATION

As the friendly relations between Turkey and Bulgaria continue to develop normally, the tendencious information which appeared lately in certain organs of the press in the two countries, as well as the unfriendly manifestations which caused them, do not correspond to the intentions and desires of the two Governments.

The interests of the two countries, if properly understood, require the development and strengthening of the relations of friendship and good neighborliness between the two peoples and it is desirable that the intelligenzia of the two countries direct its common efforts to create in public opinion of both Turkey and Bulgaria an atmosphere of friendship and understanding.

Knowing the good will of the two Governments, we firmly believe that they will succeed in removing from both sides all causes of dissatisfaction and will check all hostile manifestations.

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DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 767.00/64 FOR #926

FROM Turkey (Shaw) DATED Mar. 8, 1936

TO NAME 1—1127 ...

REGARDING: Turkey is desirous of bringing Bulgaria into the Balkan Entente. The Turks are on the alert as to what is going on on the other side of the frontier, as evidenced by the anti-Bulgarian comments or news items which appear in Turkish press as a warning to Sofia.

wb

767.74/63

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767.74

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/64

SEE 767.68119/934 FOR #244

FROM Bulgaria (Sterling) DATED June 23, 1936

TO NAME

1—1127

REGARDING: Straits Conference at Montreux.

Encloses copy of statement made by the chief Bulgarian Delegate to - in which Bulgaria expresses sympathy with Turkish request and friendship for Turkey.

Wi

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 372

Sofia, April 22, 1937.

Subject: Visit of the Turkish Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

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In U. S. A.

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MAY 13 1937
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

767.74/65

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

767.74

Sir:

As of possible interest, I have the honor to report that the Turkish Prime Minister, Mr. Ismet Inönü, and his Foreign Minister, Dr. Rüstü Aras, arrived in Sofia April 20, en route from Belgrade to Istanbul, and spent almost the entire day in the capital. They were entertained by the King at a luncheon at his Palace at Vrania, a short distance out of Sofia, where they passed most of the afternoon discussing.....

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discussing their recent visit to Yugoslavia with both the King and the Prime Minister Mr. Kiosseivanoff. Private audiences were granted separately to Mr. Inönü and Dr. Aras prior to the luncheon.

In discussing the visit with an official of the Foreign Office who was attached to the visitors during their stay here, I was informed that Dr. Aras spoke boastfully of the importance of their visit to Belgrade and stated that the reception given them there tended to indicate that Turkey was more respected and better liked in that country than Bulgaria notwithstanding the recent conclusion of the Treaty of Friendship between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Dr. Aras stated further that he was endeavoring to build up a powerful group of Balkan countries, so powerful that it would command the respect of the great European powers. In this connection he intimated that he was in favor of the rearmament of Bulgaria and of the increasing of her armed forces. I was also told that in the conversations with the King and Mr. Kiosseivanoff, both Mr. Inönü and Dr. Aras stressed the importance of Bulgaria's joining the Balkan Pact, indicating that they were supported in this respect by the Yugoslav Prime Minister.

My informant said in conclusion that the information which the Foreign Office had received from Belgrade indicated that the statements of the Turkish Foreign Minister were in many instances exaggerated and that the Foreign Office had had no indication from Yugoslavia as

to.....

to its wish that Bulgaria change its policy with regard to the Balkan Pact.

1/ There is attached hereto a translation of a statement given to the press by the Turkish Prime Minister before leaving Bulgaria.

Respectfully yours,

K. deG. MacVitty
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

Enclosure:
Translation of statement
by Turkish Prime Minister.

File 710
KGM/MM

Copies to Istanbul and
Belgrade.

Enclosure to despatch No. 372,
April 22, 1937, Sofia.

TRANSLATION

In Plovdiv the Turkish Prime Minister made the following statement to the press:

"Before my departure from Ankara, His Majesty the King did me the honor of inviting me to stop over in Sofia on my way back from Belgrade. Thanks to this high honor I have been able to see with pleasure the progress and development since my previous visit here by our neighbor with whom we entertain such friendly relations.

"We are deeply moved by the cordial reception given us which will certainly be much appreciated by the Turkish people. Through the policy which we have pursued during the last ten years, we have always laid particular stress on our friendship with Bulgaria.

"Deeply convinced that progress and prosperity depend chiefly on peace and tranquillity, we have sincerely attached ourselves to the ideal of the Balkans without any secret intentions and with complete confidence in the other Balkan States. We are very happy to see the fruitful and positive results of the wise policy pursued by the Royal Bulgarian Government and we are hopeful regarding the future of inter-Balkan relations.

"Your Prime Minister, the prominent statesman who is thoroughly acquainted with your national problems, is at the same time a great partisan of Balkan peace. I am delighted to have had the opportunity of talking with him and becoming better acquainted. I consider it a happy event that I have been able to come into contact with the Bulgarian Government on my way back from Yugoslavia, where I had the opportunity of seeing that the Yugoslav Government is animated by the noblest feelings towards Bulgaria. The good relations existing between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia will no doubt aid the cause of peace in all Balkan countries.

"I wish the Bulgarian press to express my best wishes to the noble Bulgarian people and the feelings of Turkey's sincerest friendship.

"It is a most agreeable duty for me to express my deep gratitude to His Majesty the King for the great honor which he bestowed upon us and to thank, through the Prime Minister Mr. Kiosseivanoff, the Bulgarian Government for the hospitality shown us during our short stay in Sofia."

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DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 760h.67/23 FOR #261

FROM Turkey (MacMurray) DATED April 22, 1937

TO NAME 1--1127 ero

REGARDING: Visit to Bulgaria of the Turkish Prime Minister.

Encloses memorandum of conversation with the Prime Minister concerning -.

767.74/66

Wi

Istanbul, Turkey, April 22, 1937.

No. 261

Subject: Transmitting Memorandum of Conversation with Prime Minister Ismet Inönü Regarding Relations Among Balkan States.

CONFIDENTIAL

760 H.67/23

767.74

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

With reference to my despatch No. 259 dated April 21, 1937, transmitting summaries of Turkish press comment on recent conversations at Belgrade, including the visit to the Yugoslav capital of the Turkish Prime Minister, Ismet Inönü, I have the honor

1/ to transmit herewith a memorandum of a conversation with the Prime Minister which I had yesterday a few hours after his return to Istanbul. His comments cover not only his visit to Belgrade but also a

conversation

conversation which he had with the King of Bulgaria when passing through that country.

Respectfully yours,

J. V. A. MacMurray.

Enclosure:
1/ - Memorandum of Conversation with Prime Minister Ismet Inönü.

A TRUE COPY OF THE SIGNED ORIGINAL
HWB

Copies to Belgrade, Sofia, Bucharest, Athens, Berlin, Paris, London, Rome and Moscow.

800.2
SWH:mmj

Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No. 261, dated April 22, 1937, from the American Embassy at Istanbul, Turkey.

Confidential Istanbul, April 21, 1937.

Memorandum of Conversation with Prime Minister Ismet Inönü, April 21, 1937.

Subject: Relations among Balkan States.

I had occasion to see Ismet Pasha, in connection with another matter, at the Pera Palace Hotel, at 10:30 this morning, shortly after his return from his visits in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.

He spoke with apparently earnest satisfaction of the reception that he had met in Belgrade, and of the conviction that Yugoslavia is cooperating whole-heartedly in the policies of the Balkan Entente designed to assure the tranquillity of this area and indeed of the world at large. He emphasized that an essential aspect of the common policy of these States was their determination to hold aloof from such doctrinal groupings as are now tending to divide Europe. And he took occasion to say that there were no secret understandings in connection with their cooperation.

He spoke with more particular zest of his brief visit in Sofia yesterday, which had given him the opportunity to confer with King Boris. He said that this had satisfied him that Bulgaria is developing rapidly towards an understanding with her Balkan neighbors -- not that she is to be expected (at any rate in the proximate future) to subscribe formally to the Balkan Entente arrangements,

but

but rather that she will more and more tend to coordinate her policies and actions with those of that Entente. The King, he said, had assured him that he was working towards that end despite the handicap of national animosities created by long years of propaganda urging exorbitant nationalistic claims and fostering suspicion and ill-will against neighboring countries.

He added that in both Yugoslavia and Bulgaria he had taken the occasion to cite Turkey as a nation which, having had the courage to renounce all territorial ambitions and concentrate its energies upon internal development, had found in that experience greater material satisfaction, and fuller opportunity for cultural as well as economic progress, than in seeking to extend its area; and he implied that these ideas had been sympathetically received by the leaders in both Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.

MacM:KOS

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/167

SEE 767.68/733 FOR #1709

FROM Greece (MacVeagh) DATED June 8, 1937

TO NAME

1—1127 GPO

REGARDING:

Comments of Yugoslav Minister at anger of President Ataturk at military incident in Bulgaria when a bicycle corps of the Bulgarian army carried placards bearing names of Greek and Turkish towns.

Wi

Athens, June 8, 1937.

No. 1709.

Subject: Visit of the Turkish Premier.

767.74

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

Supplementing my despatch No. 1699 of May 31, 1937, I have the honor to report that since General Ismet Inönü had a long talk with Premier Stoyadinovitch of Yugoslavia during the former's train journey through that country on his way to visit Athens, I consulted my Yugoslavian colleague here as to his understanding of the reasons for that visit. Mr. Christitch, who is dean of the Diplomatic Corps here and an able diplomat, slated soon to be Minister to Italy, replied that it was his information that the visit was made at the special request of General Metaxas and that the invitation

was

was accepted with the knowledge and advice of London. In regard to the extraordinary telephonic message of Kemal Atatürk, reported in my despatch under reference, Mr. Christitch mentioned a military demonstration or review held in Philippopolis some time ago, at which a bicycle corps of the Bulgarian army openly flaunted placards featuring the names not only of Kavalla, Serres, Drama, Dedeagatch, etc., but also of Adrianople and other Turkish towns, and remarked that he understood that this incident had made Kemal furious and that it was the direct cause of his outburst, which however he characteristically coordinated with Ismet's movements and calculated to the precise moment when it would have the most effect.

Respectfully yours,

Lincoln MacVeagh.

File No. 710.

LMacV/pe

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 77 Sofia, May 17, 1938.

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JUN 20 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Subject: Visit of Turkish Prime Minister and Foreign Minister to Sofia.

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
JUN 4 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUN 1 1938
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

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AND RECORDS

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M. I. D.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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JUN 4 - 1938
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF STATE

I have the honor to report that, as indicated in my confidential telegram No. 9 of April 30, 1938, 740.00/375 C.F. the Turkish Prime Minister, Mr. Djelal Bayer, and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Rüstü Arras, paid a short visit to Sofia on Friday, May 13th, en route from Belgrade to Istanbul, arriving at 9:50 a.m. and departing at 4:30 p.m.

According

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JUN 21 1938

767.74/68

According to an official communiqué issued by the Foreign Office, the visit was one of courtesy only. However, both the officials had an hour's interview with the King and Premier Kiosseivanoff, and later were entertained by the King at a luncheon. Despite the fact that it was officially insisted that the visit was without political significance, I have been confidentially informed that the matter of a practical rapprochement between Bulgaria and the countries adhering to the Balkan Pact was discussed. It is understood that this matter will be one of the subjects discussed during the forthcoming visit of the Yugoslav Premier.

There is attached a translation of the statements made by the Turkish Prime Minister and Premier Kiosseivanoff to the press.

Respectfully yours,

Ray Atherton

File 711
KGM/RWH

Copies to American Legation
at Belgrade and American
Embassy at Istanbul.

Enclosures:

Translation of Statements by
Bulgarian and Turkish Prime
Ministers.

Enclosure to Despatch No. 77 of
May 17, 1938, Legation, Sofia.

Translation of Statements Made to the Press
by the Bulgarian and Turkish Prime Ministers.

ZORA, May 14, 1938.

The Turkish Prime Minister, Mr. Djelal Bayar, made the following statements to the Bulgarian Press through the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency:

"Upon the amiable invitation of the Royal Bulgarian Government, we stopped with great pleasure in Sofia on our way back to Ankara. This short visit to your beautiful capital gave me the opportunity to become more closely acquainted with the eminent Prime Minister of Bulgaria, Mr. Kiosseivanoff, with whom Mr. Arras and myself have had the opportunity of exchanging views on the questions in which our two countries are interested.

"The august attention which H.M. the King has deigned to show us is a great honor, for which we are profoundly grateful.

"The Royal Government and the population have accorded us a most friendly reception; we are very touched by the manifestations of friendship which have so generously been given us.

"I am leaving Bulgaria with the impression that these manifestations of friendship are an evidence of the relations of the good neighborliness which exists between our two countries, and that they confirm the spirit of cooperation between Bulgaria and her Balkan neighbors."

The Prime

The Bulgarian Prime Minister, Mr. Kiosseivanoff, yesterday made the following statements to the representative of the Anatolian Agency:

"We are happy today to have the visit of two prominent statesmen of our neighbor and friend, Turkey. This visit, although short, is a new evidence of the friendly relations which exist between our two countries and of the desire of the two Governments to make them still more cordial. I would like the Anatolian Agency to express my feelings of live and sincere sympathy, as well as those of the entire Bulgarian nation, for the Turkish nation."

767.74

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 760h.67/29 FOR #708

FROM Turkey (MacMurray) DATED June 23, 1938

/79/ NAME 1—1127

767.74/69

REGARDING:

Visits of Turkish statesmen to Belgrade and Sofia, and of Yugoslav Minister of War to Ankara. Turkish reaction to the -.

69

ML

767.74

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/70

SEE 770.00/578 FOR #795

FROM Turkey (MacMurray) DATED Aug. 23, 1938

TO NAME

1—1127 •••

REGARDING: Bulgarian attitude toward the Turks within its borders. In a memorandum of a conversation with Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs referring to -, he undoubtedly had in mind the steps taken by the Bulgarian Government during the past year to meet certain wishes of the Turkish Government in respect to the Turkish minority schools in Bulgaria.

ge

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 740.00/622 FOR Tel. #9, 4 p.m.

FROM Bulgaria (Atherton) DATED Mar. 15, 1939
TO NAME

1—1127

REGARDING: Official visit of Prime Minister to Ankara; Reports-

767.74/71

b

767.74

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 740.00/679 FOR tel #57 8pm

FROM Rumania (Gunther) DATED Mar.24, 1939

TO NAME

1—1127 ofo

767.74/72

REGARDING: Relations between Turkey and Bulgaria

Turkey has assured Rumania they will attack Bulgaria in case of Bulgarian aggression

dg

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 740.00/751 FOR #811

FROM Rumania (Hibbard) DATED Mar. 22, 1939

TO NAME 1—1127 0 F O

REGARDING: Recent Turkish-Bulgarian conversations; Press comments reflect considerable satisfaction and gratification apparent in Rumanian circles over the-

mb

767.74/73

767.74

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 740.00/749 FOR #223

FROM Bulgaria (Atherton) DATED Mar. 23, 1939

TO NAME

1—1127 GPO

REGARDING: Recent Sofia-Ankara conversations; First impressions of- have given great satisfaction; Official communique issued stresses the determination of the Balkan nations for peace.

mb

767.74/74

767.74/75

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 765.75/486 FOR Tel#35 11 p.m.

FROM Turkey (MacMurray) DATED April 12, 1939

NAME

1—1127 GPO

REGARDING:

Bulgaria feels she would be endangered by an aggression against any of the Balkan states and has therefore given Turkey assurance that she would not take any action against members of the Entente.

ml

767.74

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/76

SEE 765.75/464 FOR Tel #13 9 a.m.

FROM Turkey (MacMurray) DATED April 11, 1939

NAME

191

1—1127 OFO

REGARDING:

Turkey's attitude towards occupation of Albania. Turkish Government long contemplated as a possibility the occupation of Albania by Bulgaria.

ml

767.74

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 774.00/95 FOR Tel#23 3 p.m.

FROM Bulgaria (Millard) DATED April 21, 1939

~~TO~~/ NAME 1—1127 GPO

767.74/77

REGARDING:

Bulgaria's relations with Turkey based on pacts of friendship and continue to be excellent. Statement by the Prime Minister before the Parliament regarding -.

ml

767.74

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 771.74/78 FOR tel #31 2pm

FROM Bulgaria (Millard) DATED May 18, 1939

TO NAME 1—1127 GPO

767.74/78

78

REGARDING: Question of the Aegean

Prime minister of the opinion the Turks hope eventually to seize western Thrace for themselves. Have strengthened their forces on Bulgarian frontier

dg

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 740.00/1623 FOR #1046

FROM Turkey (MacMurray) DATED May 16, 1939
TO NAME

1—1127 ere

REGARDING: Visit to Turkey of Bulgarian Prime Minister from March 16 to March 21.

Reports regarding-

mb

767.74/79

767.74

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

767.74/80

SEE 774.00/97 FOR Despatch #262

FROM Bulgaria (Atherton) DATED June 1, 1939.

TO NAME

1—1127 o F o

REGARDING: Turkish-Bulgarian Relations.

Since the British guarantees, there is little hope of any collaboration between Turkey andBulgaria in connection with the entry of Bulgaria into the Balkan Entente.

80

hc

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

NC
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (C)

SOFIA

FROM

Dated August 5, 1939

Recd 11 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AUG 7 1939 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE AUG 8 1939 DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

767.74/181

45, August 5, noon.

In view of alarmist reports regarding Bulgarian Turkish frontier incidents and concentration of Turkish and Bulgarian troops (see despatch 303, July 25) I called upon the Prime Minister.

He said that according to his information the Turks had 200,000 troops on the Bulgarian frontier and he feared their presence to be a threat to force Bulgaria into a Balkan bloc although Turkey continues to justify their presence as a precautionary measure to thwart any attempt by the Axis to march through Bulgaria towards the Dardanelles. While the Prime Minister had no objection to the construction of forts his contention was that the Turkish measures could only be aimed at Bulgaria, given the distance between the Turkish frontier and the Axis and the fact that to threaten Turkey the Axis troops would first have to violate the territory of Rumania, Greece, or Yugoslavia, fellow members of the Balkan Entente, before reaching Bulgaria. Bulgaria had repeatedly made it clear that without territorial concessions she would not join a Balkan bloc and that coercion would be

FILED AUG 9 - 1939

of

of no avail. If Bulgaria were invaded, and rumors are current that Turkey wishes to take possession of certain strategic positions such as the Dervish Hill on Bulgarian soil, Bulgaria would of course resist with all her strength. He said that he had no fear of the Turkish army if a conflict would not involve other forces against his country. Also should the Rumanians join the Turks, Hungary either alone or backed by Germany would attack Rumania. Similarly the Greeks are menaced by Italy. When I remarked that this would mean Bulgaria's fighting on Germany's side he replied that although this is not Bulgaria's intention it would come to that in the end. He stated that while until some months ago western Europe was the focus of danger now an explosion seemed more likely in the Balkans and the Turkish frontier had become the danger point. Bulgarian troops had also been sent to the frontier but only two months after the Turkish concentration.

I remarked that it was disquieting to have so many troops concentrated on opposite sides of the frontier and he said that it was just for this reason that Bulgarian troops had been withdrawn to about ten kilometers leaving only the regular frontier guards. Asked when the Turks had strengthened their frontier forces he said, " Immediately after the British encircling" and implied that Turkey

was

was not acting alone; I asked how a solution might be found and he said that the Turks were holding maneuvers and that if the troops were not removed or greatly reduced thereafter (in fact he had reports that the ten divisions might be increased to fifteen) the situation would be serious indeed.

Asked what the British thought of the attitude of their Turkish ally he said (#) made inquiries in London and Lord Halifax had promised to discuss the question with the Turkish Government. I gained the impression that he held Britain responsible for the behavior of her ally. Without the weight of Great Britain the Balkan situation though disturbing seemed in balance as outlined above and Turkey's activity could therefore only be attributed to her reliance on support from the peace front regarding which I detected a feeling of suspicion on the Prime Minister's part.

My colleagues give various estimates of the Turkish troops on the frontier ranging from 100 to 160,000. Though one colleague stated that he was "sure" there are now 110,000 Bulgarians at the frontier a military attache puts the figure between 50 and 60,000. The same colleague said the Prime Minister had assured him that Bulgaria's troops were now better equipped than the Turkish and in

one

one month their German arms orders would be delivered.

Bulgaria is aware that a world war may lead to her obliteration from the map. Any provocation from this side would be the height of imprudence therefore much seems to depend on British intentions and that country's power to control her ally Turkey.

MILLARD

NPL

(#) Apparent Omission

PREPARING OFFICE
WILL INDICATE WHETHER
Collect
Charge Department
OR
Charge to
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TELEGRAM SENT

Department of State

TO BE TRANSMITTED
CONFIDENTIAL CODE
NONCONFIDENTIAL CODE
PARTAIR
PLAIN

Washington,

August 9, 1939.

This cable was sent in confidential code.
It should be carefully paraphrased before
being communicated to anyone.

AMEMBASSY

ISTANBUL (TURKEY)

33

Your comments are requested regarding the information contained in Sofia's No. 45, August 5, noon.

Acting

767.74/81

NE GVA/EG

OR

AUG 9 1939.

1939 AUG 9 AM 10 34

Enciphered by _____

Sent by operator _____ *M.*, _____, *19*____, _____

767.74/81

PREPARING OFFICE
WILL INDICATE WHETHER

Collect
Charge Department
OR
Charge to
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TELEGRAM SENT

Department of State

TO BE TRANSMITTED
CONFIDENTIAL CODE
NONCONFIDENTIAL CODE
PARTAIR
PLAIN

Washington,
August ~~8~~ 9, 1939.
11a

1939 AUG 9 AM 10 34

This cable was sent in communication code. It should be carefully paraphrased before being communicated to anyone.

AMLEGATION

SOFIA (BULGARIA)

17 Please repeat your no. 45, August 5, noon, to Istanbul.

Acting

767.74/81

767.74/81

NE GVA/EG

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AUG 9 1939.

1939 AUG 9 AM 10 53

Enciphered by _____

Sent by operator _____ M., _____, 19____, _____

D. C. R.—No. 50

1—1462 U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 303 Sofia, July 25, 1939

Subject: Bulgarian-Turkish frontier incident.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
AUG 18 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 9 1939
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
1939 AUG 8 PM 2 08

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-M/C
AUG 10 1939
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that on July 23 the Ministry of War issued a communiqué, 1/ translation enclosed, regarding a frontier incident which took place near Svilengrad two days earlier. This incident is of no particular importance in itself if it did not coincide with a certain tension on the Turkish-Bulgarian frontier following the large concentration of Turkish troops in the frontier zone. The Turks began moving troops there three months ago when, according...

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AUG 21 1939

767.74/82

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according to the Prime Minister, there were six divisions (see despatches Nos. 252 and 253, of May 18 and 19). It is reported that their number has been considerably increased and, according to one unofficial source, they now amount to twelve divisions. It is also understood that new lines of fortifications for the protection of Adrianopolis are being constructed under the supervision of French and British military experts.

771.74/78 / 740.00/1621

It will be recalled that, as reported in the despatch first above referred to, that the Prime Minister was informed by the Turks, in reply to his request for an explanation, that the troops had been placed there as a precaution against a possible menace from Italy. However, the fact that these troops are stationed not only on the Greek-Turkish frontier, but on the northern Bulgarian-Turkish frontier as well is interpreted here as revealing the apprehension on the part of Turkey and Greece that Bulgaria may be a partner of Italy should the axis make a new drive in the Balkans.

The concentration of troops caused considerable concern to the Bulgarian Government which has also taken some precautionary measures. Frontier posts have been strengthened, troops from southern Bulgaria moved nearer the frontier, and leaves in the army and of public officials cancelled. The fear is expressed here that the Turks, in the course of the forthcoming manoeuvres in Thrace, may even try to occupy certain strategic points on Bulgarian territory.

The....

The movement of troops in the frontier zone and the news arriving from Turkey have created a state of tension, and alarmist rumors about frontier incidents had been circulating in Sofia before the incident reported above took place.

The "Neue Wiener Tageblatt", commenting on the Balkan situation, wrote recently that upon the instigation of Great Britain Turkey would occupy part of the southeastern Bulgarian territory (see also despatch 252, of May 18, mentioned above). This seems to indicate the desire on the part of the axis to injure further the relations between Turkey and Bulgaria by fostering the existing suspicions on both sides.

Respectfully yours,

Hugh Millard

Hugh Millard
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

Enclosure:
Translation of communiqué

HM/MM

Enclosure to despatch No.
303, of July 25, Sofia

Translation of communiqué

On July 21, 10:30 p.m., between posts Nos. 9 and 10 of the frontier company of Svilengrad, our frontier guards observed two armed persons walking on our territory. When ordered to stop they began shooting. Our soldiers opened fire and as a result one of the persons was wounded, the other escaping. At dawn it was established that they were two Turkish soldiers.

The Commander of the frontier company requested an interview with the Turkish frontier officer, and two hours later ordered that the wounded soldier should be handed over to the Turks. At the meeting on July 22 between the frontier officers the incident was completely liquidated, inasmuch as it was established that our frontier guards had acted in accordance with regulations.

A protocol on the matter was drawn up.

****

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EMC-
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone (C)

FROM Istanbul

Dated August 12, 1939

Rec'd. 9:15 p.m.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
AUG 15 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
File Copy
AUG 14 1939
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State

Washington

42, August 12, noon.

Department's 33, August 9, 11 a. m.

According to the best information available here Turkey has 150,000 troops in European Turkey excluding the Dardanelles, these troops are not all stationed along the Bulgarian frontier.

Turkey commenced increasing her forces in Thrace prior to the Anglo-Turkish declaration of May 12.

During the past few weeks there have been additional troops, probably two divisions, moved into Thrace in connection with maneuvers which are to be held in that region August 15-August 25. Military attaches from Great Britain invited to last day of maneuvers and parade.

It is the Embassy's opinion that the concentration of Turkish troops in Thrace does not signify any aggressive intentions on the part of Turkey against Bulgaria. In view of the probability in the event of war of a drive toward the Dardanelles from the direction of Bulgaria, in which Bulgaria may participate, Turkey will undoubtedly find it a military necessity to maintain considerable forces in that area.

ULUS.

FILED AUG 16 1939

767.74/83

NM

EMC

 #42, August 12, noon, from Istanbul.

ULUS, organ of Republican people's Party in Ankara, yesterday denounces rumors published abroad with regard to significance of Turkish concentration in Thrace and stated that Turkey desires the best possible relations with Bulgaria. This accords with my own impression that the Turkish Government in spite of Italy's suspicions does in fact desire closer and more friendly relationship and still has hopes of bringing it about.

With regard to British attitude it may be stated that the British Embassy here has all along reflected an apparent desire of British policy to have Bulgaria brought into the Balkan Entente and that its military attache here, who has hitherto been accredited to Greece and previously also to Bulgaria but has just been assigned to Sofia exclusively is an almost fanatical exponent of military necessity of winning over Bulgaria to the anti-axis combination.

MACMURRAY

JRL
WWC

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
AUG 7 - 1939
MR. WELLES

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
AUG 9 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

August 7, 1939

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
RECEIVED
AUG 11 1939
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

Mr. Welles

I have consulted M.I.D. about Bulgarian and Turkish strength.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 9 1939
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

The Bulgarian army in summertime comprises about 60,000 men. There are reserves of trained men amounting to 650,000, but not more than half of these could be equipped. In 1938 there were only 300,000 rifles, 2,800 automatic rifles, 1,500 machine guns, 120 tanks and a small air force composed entirely of German made planes. Bulgarian artillery strength is not known, for artillery Bulgaria is entirely dependent upon Germany.

Turkey which normally has about 150,000 men under arms has today about 450,000. Of these up until recently M.I.D. thought there were about 120,000 on the Bulgarian frontier, 250,000 on the coast opposite the Dodecanese and less scattered. As to equipment Turkey had 830,000 rifles, 20,000 automatic rifles, 4,500 machine guns, some artillery and a small air force with planes made in four or five different countries.

Man for man, M.I.D. rates the Bulgarian a better fighter than the Turk and rates the Bulgarian command a

767.74/84

a little higher than the Turkish command.

M.I.D. believes that Turkey would be able to defend Thrace against any attack by Bulgaria, but that because of the configuration of the ground Thrace does not offer Turkey a good bridgehead from which to launch an attack on Bulgaria.

Pierrepont Moffat

Eu:PM:ASD

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

August 24, 1939.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Summary of despatch No. 306 from Legation at Sofia dated August 5, 1939.

Subject: The Military Situation on the Turko-Bulgar Frontier

Mr. Millard had an interesting conversation with the Bulgarian Prime Minister, largely connected with the concentration of troops on the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier. M. Kiosseivanoff said that he had information that there were ten divisions of Turkish troops actually on the frontier and he understood them to be at war strength, which would mean 200,000 soldiers. The Turks' justification for their presence, the Prime Minister said, was that the measures were wholly precautionary vis-à-vis the Axis powers in an attempted march through Bulgaria to the Dardanelles. M. Kiosseivanoff made a sarcastic reference to this excuse, adding that he himself could only conclude that the measures were aimed solely at Bulgaria. Asked when the Turks had strengthened their forces on the border, he said "immediately after the British guarantees", giving the impression that the British were responsible for Turkey's

unfriendly

unfriendly attitude. He professed not to understand Turkish policy, adding that coercion to force Bulgaria into the Balkan Entente would be of no avail -- she would not enter without receiving territorial concessions.

There seems to be a famous "Dervish hill" in Bulgaria which the Turks would like to seize as guns mounted on that hill could reach Adrianople.

In the event of Balkan hostilities, M. Kiosseivanoff thought the Turks and the Rumanians would advance north and south respectively on the Bulgarian coast, which, of course, would force Bulgaria on to the German side contrary to its intention and desire to remain neutral.

M. Kiosseivanoff declared that "Germany was impregnable on her western frontier and he was assured when in Berlin that in case of war she would content herself with defending the Siegfried Line without launching any offensive against the French line."

With respect to Anglo-French-Russian flirtations, M. Kiosseivanoff said that the sending of military missions to Moscow did not indicate that an agreement would necessarily follow. "Russia's internal position

was such that she must remain neutral; that was her real policy".

In conclusion, Mr. Millard observed that although M. Kiosseivanoff's statements were not reassuring, his manner was more cheerful than his words.

Eu:Coe:AMR.

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 306 Sofia, August 5, 1939.

EO
~~NE~~
~~AMC~~
~~PAID~~

Subject: Conversation with the Prime Minister regarding concentration of Turkish troops on frontier.

Copy in So

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
AUG 23 1939
File Cor
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Rating	Distribution Instructions
Grade for	E MID

AUG 31 1939

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 26 1939
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK Yes No
to the Field

767.74/85

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
SEP 5 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

767.74/81

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-MC
AUG 31 1939
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my telegram No. 45, of August 5, 12 noon, regarding the concentration of troops on the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier and to amplify my conversation with the Prime Minister.

FILED
SEP 7 - 1939

I opened the conversation by referring to the disquieting reports of the concentration of Turkish troops on the Bulgarian frontier which, according to rumors, amounted to 10 divisions, or 120 to 125,000 troops,

NM

4

troops, and asked whether he could clarify the situation. The Prime Minister said that he had information to the effect that there were 10 divisions not only near but actually on the Bulgarian frontier and he understood them to be at war strength, which would mean 200,000 troops. In reply to my inquiry as to how the Turks justified their presence there, he said that they had informed him that the measures were purely precautionary vis-à-vis the Axis powers who might attempt to march through Bulgaria to the Dardanelles. The Prime Minister declared he had replied that if they were referring to the Italians, the latter would doubtless march on Salonika and on through Thrace, avoiding Bulgaria; if they had the Germans in mind, they would no doubt invade Rumania. Both are Turkey's partners in the Balkan Entente. Surely Turkey did not believe that her friends would allow German troops to march through their territory ? And granting that they did, Turkey would have ample time in which to strengthen her forces on the frontier long before the Germans or Italians could get there. Consequently, he could only conclude that the measures were aimed solely at Bulgaria.

I then referred to rumors regarding the calling of various classes to the colors and the sending of troops to the frontier. He said this was true to a certain extent without, however, giving any figure. (This is being made the subject of a separate despatch) I ventured the remark that it was disturbing

to...

to have so many troops concentrated on opposite sides of the frontier and that some unfortunate incident could easily occur. He said he realized this only too well and for this reason the Bulgarian troops had been withdrawn about ten kilometres from the frontier, only the regular frontier guards remaining at the border proper. In this connection, he mentioned the incident of July 21 when a Turkish soldier was wounded (see despatch No. 303, July 25) and said it was of no importance; the wounded man was returned the following morning. Asked when the Turks had strengthened their frontier forces, he said: "Immediately after the British guarantee," and without saying it in so many words, gave me the impression that he felt that the British were therefore responsible for Turkey's unfriendly attitude. (It will be recalled that the Prime Minister stated there were six Turkish divisions at the frontier in April -- see telegram No. 31 of May 18, 2 p.m.) He said that it was not until two months later that the Bulgarian forces were strengthened. In reply to a question from the Turkish Minister as to why the Bulgarian troops were there, he said: "Monsieur le Ministre, vous vous moquez de moi." He said that he assured the Minister that as soon as the Turkish troops are withdrawn Bulgaria would do likewise. In reply to my inquiry he stated that Bulgaria had no objection whatever to the construction of forts on the Turkish side of the frontier. He added that the Greeks had strengthened their forces on the

whole...

whole frontier with Bulgaria from Turkey to Yugoslavia, but that Bulgaria has not taken any similar measures.

I then asked what he personally thought might be the motive of the Turks and he professed not to understand Turkish policy. However, he feared Turkey might wish to use the troops as a threat to coerce Bulgaria into joining the Balkan Entente or "the Peace Front -- if one can describe it thus." He said that Bulgaria wanted nothing from Turkey and had made it clear time and again that she could not enter the Balkan Entente without receiving territorial concessions, and that coercion would be of no avail. He said that should the Turks invade Bulgarian soil, of course it would mean war. Here I mentioned the famous Dervish hill which is in Bulgaria and which, according to rumors, Turkey would like to seize. He said it was strategically highly important both for Turkey and Bulgaria, since guns mounted on that hill could reach Adrianople, and that if it were ceded to Turkey it would open the door to attack on Bulgaria. He then said the Turkish army alone did not worry Bulgaria and he stated with obvious confidence that Bulgarian forces one third the size of the Turkish army would be sufficient to defeat them. Hereupon he smilingly offered to give me this statement in writing, making a gesture as if to reach for a pad. He said actually the line was too short for a large number of troops; Bulgaria had defeated Turkey here in 1912

with...

with 4 divisions and that the Turks, being so crowded, were in danger of epidemics.

As regards the British responsibilities for the activities of their ally, Turkey, he said that he had gone into this question very thoroughly with the British Minister before the latter's departure three days ago. Furthermore, he had inquiries made in London and Lord Halifax had promised to take the matter up with Turkey. As mentioned in my telegram above referred to, the Prime Minister left me with the impression that the "nigger in the woodpile" was Great Britain and that the onus of responsibility for her ally's behavior lay with that country. As outlined in the following paragraph, the situation in the Balkans, though in itself not reassuring, would seem to be pretty well balanced if Turkey were not backed by Britain.

I asked the Prime Minister what he thought of the rumors that there were military plans for the Turks to make contact with the Rumanians in case of war and his opinion regarding the military tactics in such an event. He said he thought the Turks would attempt to march on Bourgas and the Rumanians on Varna, but the latter probably would hesitate before doing so because they would be attacked by Hungary backed, if necessary, by Germany. Here I remarked that Bulgaria in such a case would find herself, nolens volens, on Germany's side, to which he replied that it would amount to that in the end, although this was

certainly...

certainly not Bulgaria's intention or desire. Similarly, he said Greece, from fear of Italy, would not dare to move.

The Prime Minister said that while some months ago war seemed more likely to break out in Central Europe, the situation was now altered owing to the concentration of the Turkish troops on the Bulgarian frontier. He thought that there was at present more likelihood of war breaking out in the Balkans, and then proceeded to outline, as he saw it, the possibility of a conflict and the form it might take.

Germany was impregnable on her western frontier and he was assured when in Berlin that in case of war she would content herself with defending the Siegfried Line without launching any offensive against the French line. Germany was equally secure on her Polish frontier. A blockade of the Baltic Sea would be effected, but no attack by the Western Powers would be undertaken in that area. Consequently, with the exception of Italy, which was of course very exposed, the war would of necessity be fought in the Balkans, where the following sequence of events might take place: Turkey, as already stated, might attack Bulgaria; Rumania might threaten to march on Varna; the Hungarians, supported by the Germans, would then attack Rumania; and the Italians would descend on Salonika. I asked what Yugoslavia would do and said I had the impression that an agreement had been reached at Bled regarding the neutrality of the two countries. He replied that

such...

such was the case and that their neutrality was an active neutrality; that the two countries would defend themselves to the utmost against an invasion from any direction. He then smiled and remarked: "But I've painted a picture of the worst that could happen. There could be a conference; adjustments might be made."

I mentioned that he had stated to me in our last conversation that Herr Hitler had assured him that Bulgaria's policy of neutrality had the entire approval of Germany, and added that prior to the British and French guarantees to Bulgaria's neighbors I had the impression that those two countries were likewise not averse to Bulgaria's neutrality. I asked if he thought this was still the case. He smiled and said: "I'm afraid it is not" but added that he had been assured in London that the British fully approved Bulgaria's policy of neutrality. Incidentally, he said that Great Britain had made some efforts for the return of the Southern Dobrudja and mentioned King Carol's visits to Turkey and Greece, expressing the hope that these visits might result in some favorable action toward Bulgaria.

I then touched on the talks in Moscow and asked for his opinion. He said that the sending of the British and French military missions did not indicate to him that an agreement will necessarily follow. I remarked that Russia's behavior throughout did not

impress...

impress me as being conducive to an understanding. He replied that he concurred that Russia's policy has been consistently to ask for more, not with a view to getting what she asked, but with the aim of making an agreement impossible and doing everything she could to keep out of war. The Prime Minister then said that Danzig was not worth a war. He had told Mr. Rendel that instead of talking with the Russians the British should talk with the Germans (sic). The Poles would not have Russian troops on their soil and it would be a dangerous thing to "bring Russians back to Europe." Russia's internal condition was such that she must remain neutral; that was her real policy. He said that even if Mr. Chamberlain's conversations with the Germans fail England would not have a free consdience if she left any stone unturned. The killing of millions of men for Danzig was ridiculous, he said, and it should be comparatively easy to find a solution. No one, he observed, had ever been able to give him a justifiable reason for the Great War.

In conclusion, I reverted to the question of the Turkish troops and asked how the question could be liquidated. He replied that the situation would be serious indeed if after the Turkish manœuvres the troops are not withdrawn or at least greatly reduced. I suggested that if there were a war it was quite natural that it would be in the interests of Great Britain and France and Germany to have it as far away as possible.

He...

He replied "exactly." He mentioned as one other possibility that Turkey might attempt to take the Dodaconese and, without saying so, seemed to relish the idea.

Though as it will be observed the Prime Minister's statements were not reassuring, his manner seemed more cheerful than his words.

Respectfully yours,

Hugh Millard

Hugh Millard
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

File 710
HM/MM

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

August 24, 1939.

PM
RTC

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Summary of despatch No. 307 from Legation at Sofia dated August 5, 1939.

Subject: Bulgaria's Military Strength

The British Military Attaché in Sofia estimated the Bulgarian forces on the Turkish frontier at 60,000 and the Turkish troops as varying from 100,000 to 200,000. As regards the total strength of the Bulgarian army Colonel Clarke estimated that the reservists of the classes from 1911 to 1914, who had been called up, amounted to 75,000, which together with the regular army of 85,000 makes a total of 160,000 now under arms. The Englishman said that in the event of war Bulgaria could put eight well-equipped infantry divisions into the field at once and four indifferently-equipped infantry divisions, making a total of 192,000 infantry. There are also two cavalry divisions with a strength of 15,000, which makes a total, plus the infantry, of 207,000, to which some could be added from other branches making a grand total of 282,000. In addition, Colonel Clarke said there are trained or partially trained about 220,000 men for whom there is at present little or no equipment.

Eu:Coe:AMR.

PM

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 307 Sofia, August 5, 1939.

Subject: Estimates of Bulgarian military strength and the number of Turkish troops on the frontier.

EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
AUG 23 1939
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AUG 28 1939
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
SEP 1 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 25 1939
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

767.74/81

I have the honor to refer to the Legation's telegram No. 45 of August 5, 12 noon, and despatch No. 306 of the same date, regarding the concentration of troops on the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier, and stating that estimates of the number of Turkish troops varied from 100 to 200,000, and that a Military Attaché had estimated the Bulgarian forces at 60,000. The officer in question was Colonel Clarke, of the British Legation. He said that there were 3 divisions and part of another whose areas are near to or abut on the...

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the frontier and they are undertaking manoeuvres there. Assuming that these manoeuvres are in the frontier zone and that the 3 divisions were up to strength, 16,000, and allowing 12,000 for the other division, he arrived at the maximum figure of 60,000, though he thought 50,000 was probably a closer estimate. He said the Prime Minister had informed the French Minister a few days ago that there were only 25,000 Bulgarian troops on the frontier, but he thought this was about half of the true figure. Asked what he thought of the estimate of 110,000 (given me by the Belgian Minister and reported in the telegram under reference) he said this figure could not be accurate since, if it were, large bodies of troops would have had to be sent from other division areas and he had "information" convincing him that they had not as yet been moved. Furthermore, he did not think Bulgaria would so reduce her other defense areas. Incidentally, this makes roughly 4 divisions and though it may be only a coincidence, it will be recalled that the Prime Minister mentioned to me (see despatch No. 306, of August 5) that Bulgaria had defeated Turkey in 1912 with 4 divisions and that too large bodies of troops in this section impede military strategy.

As regards the present total strength of the Bulgarian army, Colonel Clarke said the whole of the 1913 and 1914 classes and part of the 1911 and 1912 classes had been called to the colors. The 1913 and 1914 classes are the two which were called up for

training

training (see despatch No. 276, of June 23). Colonel Clarke estimates that these reservists amount to 75,000 which together with the regular army of 85,000 make a total of 160,000 now under arms.

Putting the question another way, I asked Colonel Clarke to give me some idea as to the number of men Bulgaria could muster if necessary. He said that should war break out he estimated that Bulgaria could put 8 well-equipped infantry divisions into the field at once and 4 indifferently-equipped infantry divisions, making a total of 12 divisions. Counting these at 16,000 each, this makes 192,000 infantry. Of these, 9 divisions would be regulars. The 10th regular division is now in process of formation. Two divisions would be reservists. There are also 2 cavalry divisions which are being converted into mobile divisions. Assuming the war strength of the latter to be 7,500 each, this makes 15,000 cavalry plus the above-mentioned 192,000, or a total of 207,000. There could be added to this from other branches enough to make a total of 282,000.

In addition to the above, Colonel Clarke said there are trained or partially trained about 220,000 men for whom there is at present little or no equipment. This, added to the above, would make roughly a half million men. He also said that the French estimated that the Turks have 10 divisions on the frontier and he thought these amounted to 100,000. A Greek secretary said the estimate of the Greek General Staff

was...

was 10 divisions which, he thought, might comprise 120 to 125,000. The Belgian Minister put the figure at 160,000 and the Prime Minister at 200,000 as reported in other despatches.

Respectfully yours,

Hugh Millard

Hugh Millard
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

File 800/820/710
HM/MM

4 IES

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

August 24, 1939.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Summary of despatch No. 308 from Legation at Sofia dated August 7, 1939.

Subject: Conversation with Belgian Minister in Sofia regarding Bulgarian-Turkish situation

(Summarizer's note: I knew the Belgian Minister while in Turkey and this despatch, although it is interesting should be judged in the light of M. Motte's Turcophobia, and the fact that he has had two Bulgarian wives. His ebullient, speculative conversational powers are reflected in his interview with Mr. Millard).

Mr. Motte described the Turks as quite devoid of scruples -- "their word, ideals, contracts, etc. mean absolutely nothing. All they are interested in is immediate advantages. As always they are playing a double game and are not one whit better in character than the rulers of Moscow. They are fundamentally conquerors and looters and have found themselves in a perfect bargaining position, their only danger being Italy". The Minister added that the recent acquisition of Alexandretta

had

had whetted the Turkish appetite and that they now wish to regain their position as a European power.

The resulting situation for Bulgaria, according to M. Motte, was obvious, and should Germany be defeated in a great war Bulgaria might in fact disappear from the European map. The Foreign Office in Bucharest had told the Belgian Minister to Rumania that in case of war a Bulgarian declaration of neutrality would not be enough, and that Turkey and Rumania would occupy the Bulgarian littoral if she did not declare herself for the Peace Front.

With respect to the situation on the Turko-Bulgarian frontier, the Belgian Minister told Mr. Millard that M. Kiosseivanoff had assured him on the day previous that Bulgarian troops were better equipped than the Turkish and that in one month all of the other arms expected from Germany would be delivered.

With regard to Rumania, M. Motte declared that Rumania would not dare to move should a war break out between Bulgaria and Turkey as she would be attacked by Hungary and backed by Germany. He believed in fact that Rumania would not resist a real invasion from the west.

Referring

Referring to the subject of Russia, M. Motte did not believe that a successful conclusion of an agreement between Britain, France, and Russia would be of any avail. Mr. Millard asked what he thought if Russia should come over to Germany's side. The Minister said that in such an event all calculations would have to be remade and he thought that the effect of all of Great Britain's guarantees would be destroyed, adding with much emphasis that the Turks would have no scruples about running out on Great Britain. Furthermore, if Russia did come to an agreement with Germany, "they might even divide Poland and Russia might seize Bessarabia."

P.M.

Eu:Coe:AMR.

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 308

Sofia, August 7, 1939.

Subject: Conversation with Belgian Minister regarding Bulgarian-Turkish situation.

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AUG 31 1939

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
SEP 5 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 28 1939
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 2 1939
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

767.74/87

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

767.74/81

With reference to my telegram No. 45, of August 5, 12 noon, and despatch No. 306, of August 5, I have the honor to report the following conversation with the Belgian Minister regarding the situation on the Turkish frontier. Mr. Motte has served in the Balkans for over twenty-five years, eleven of which were spent in Turkey, and is considered an authority on this part of the world.

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SEP 6 - 1939

NM

He...

He said that to understand the situation one must understand the character of the Turks. The conventional statement that the Turks are the only gentlemen in the Orient is arrogant nonsense, though some of the old Turks were gentlemen. The present Turks are quite devoid of scruples of any kind; their word, ideals, contracts, etc. mean absolutely nothing. All they are interested in is immediate advantages. As always they are playing a double game and are not one whit better in character than the rulers of Moscow. They are fundamentally conquerors and looters and have found themselves in a perfect bargaining position, their only danger being Italy. France, entrusted for centuries by Rome with the protection of Christians in the Near East, has been compelled through the German menace to give Alexandretta with its large Christian population to the Turks in order to win their support. This success has whetted the Turkish appetite and they now wish to become once more a European power and regain some of the territory she lost in 1912 and during the world war. The outward reason for the Balkan Entente was to prevent great powers from having influence in the Balkans; the actual reason was to prevent Bulgaria from regaining any lost territory. By her alliance with Great Britain Turkey has completely destroyed the ostensible justification for the Entente and, to a certain extent, Greece and Rumania have done the same by becoming protégés of the Western Powers. The

Turks,

Turks, Rumanians and Greeks would like to wipe Bulgaria off the map and Mr. Motte believed that if there was a world war Germany would be defeated in the end, and since Bulgaria was being gradually pushed into the German camp owing largely to the policy of the democracies, Bulgaria might in fact disappear from the map of Europe. He said that the Belgian Minister at Bucharest was informed by the Rumanian Foreign Office that in case of war a Bulgarian declaration of neutrality would not be enough and if Bulgaria did not declare herself for the Peace Front, Turkey and Rumania intended to occupy the Bulgarian Black Sea coast as "surety."

I asked what was his estimate of the Turkish troops on the frontier and mentioned the usual figure of 10 divisions. He said he understood there were 11 divisions. Asked how many this would amount to, he thought, without counting supply services, this would come to about 160,000. Asked how many Bulgarian troops there were, he asserted with complete conviction that there were 110,000 and confirmed the Prime Minister's statement that they had been withdrawn ten kilometres from the frontier. Mr. Motte also said that the Prime Minister had assured him yesterday that Bulgarian troops were better equipped than the Turkish and that in one month all of the other arms expected from Germany would be delivered.

Mr. Motte also agreed that today the danger of a war breaking out in the Balkans was far greater than

in...

in Europe and that the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier was the delicate spot. If Germany wished a war, it would be convenient to have one break out here and than spread from the Balkans, thus leaving the question of blame obscure by the maze of false reports, etc. He said nothing would be easier than for the Turks to dress up 200 men in Bulgarian uniforms and "have them invade Turkey" and he was confident that should they decide to start a war some such ruse would be resorted to; but he asserted with the utmost conviction that Bulgaria would under no circumstances precipitate a war.

Asked how a war might spread should it break out on the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier, he said, as did the Prime Minister (see despatch under reference), that Rumania would not dare to move because she would be attacked by Hungary backed by Germany. He believed in fact that Rumania would not even resist a real invasion from the west. At the same time Italy would strike at Greece and Bulgaria would not have to fear Yugoslavia, since there was nothing Yugoslavia wanted from this country and, therefore, Bulgaria could concentrate practically her whole army on the Turkish frontier. Incidentally, Mr. Motte said there were 4 Turkish divisions at the Dardanelles and that this further complicated the Turkish strategic position, there being a danger of having too many men to supply properly; furthermore, the Turkish forces, with their back to a bottle neck, might easily become too compact and unsuitable for effective military strategy.

I asked whether it was possible that the British were back of the Turks and their present minatory attitude. He said that he did not know what to think, but that the Prime Minister had told him that he considered the Turks were acting with full British approval.

Mr. Motte then referred to the whole post-war policy of the western democracies as deplorable. He said that if immediately after the Czech debâcle of last September the British had demanded that the Rumanians give up the Southern Dobrudja, he felt sure that they would have done so almost gladly. But Britain's guarantees of Greece and Rumania and her alliance with Turkey had pushed Bulgaria towards Germany. He agreed with me that the Prime Minister seemed to have accepted Bulgaria's position as an enemy of Turkey and, consequently, as a most reluctant but eventual collaborator of Germany as things stood now. He feared that if the Allies' deplorable policy continued the Prime Minister would have no choice.

Turning to the subject of Russia, he said that after these drawn-out British talks he felt that a successful conclusion of an agreement between Britain and Russia would be of little avail, since any moral prestige which would have been gained is now lost as a result of the humiliating negotiations to which Great Britain has been subjected in Russia. I recalled that he had said he was sure Germany would be defeated

and...

and asked what he thought if Russia were to come over to Germany's side. He said that in such an event all calculation would have to be remade and he thought that the effect of all of Great Britain's guarantees would be destroyed, adding with much emphasis that the Turks would have no scruples about running out on Great Britain. Furthermore, if Russia did come to an agreement with Germany, they might even divide Poland and Russia might seize Besserabia.

I again returned to the attitude of Great Britain. He said he was an old friend of Mr. Momtchiloff, the Bulgarian Minister in London. On his recent visit to Sofia Mr. Motte had asked him what exactly was Great Britain's attitude toward Bulgaria, and Mr. Momtchiloff had replied that Great Britain was indifferent to the fate of Bulgaria and quite willing to see her wiped off the map if this would facilitate matters for Great Britain. Mr. Motte said the situation now was almost exactly the same as in 1915; the Allies were unwilling to do anything for Bulgaria and Germany was urging the justice of her territorial claims. Then it was Macedonia; now those claims are renounced. Bulgaria only wants Tzaribrod and Bossilegrad as an act of courtesy. From Rumania she only wants the Southern Dobrudja (which even the Rumanians admitted was just, that is, before the British guarantee); and from Greece an outlet to the Aegean, which Bulgaria does not press as an immediate need. But the democracies did nothing. While it was perhaps true

that...

that the British wanted peace once they were strong, and that might be soon, he wondered whether they would not want to bring a war to avenge the insults of the past year and smash Germany. In any event, Great Britain's position in respect to the concentration of Turkish troops was unclear and had aroused justifiable suspicions in Bulgaria.

Respectfully yours,

Hugh Millard

Hugh Millard
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

File 710
HM/MM

4 [illegible]

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 741.67/118 Confidential File FOR Tel. #50, 6pm

FROM Turkey (MacMurray) DATED Aug. 25, 1939

TO NAME

1—1127

REGARDING: Turkey has not mobilized: Although -, the number of men under colors was doubled some months ago and maneuvers are now in progress along the Bulgarian border.

767.74/88

hr

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 314

Sofia, August 18, 1939.

Subject: Concentration of troops on Bulgarian-Turkish frontier.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS SEP 9 1939 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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SEP 14 1939

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DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS SEP 13 1939 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SEP 20 1939 DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my despatch No. 306 of August 5, reporting a conversation with the Prime Minister when he displayed marked suspicion at the concentration of Turkish troops at the frontier. It will be recalled that he interpreted this as a threat to Bulgaria, in which the British were not disassociated.

About a month ago a number of Bulgarian troops were being hurried eastwards to the frontier. The

feeling

767.74/85

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A-M/C SEP 14 1939 ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

FILED SEP 21 1939

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NM

feeling of excitement and nervous tension which prevailed at that time has now considerably subsided. The rumors of incidents and clashes between the Turks and Bulgarians which were then circulating have ceased, and mutually friendly references have appeared in the press of both countries.

It is perhaps too soon properly to analyze this period of tension. Large numbers of troops are still undertaking manoeuvers on both sides of the frontier and it is still not clear whether Turkey has been acting with British approval. Seen from Sofia, however, it does look as if the Turks deliberately made a military display. Some Bulgarians suggest that this was an attempt to frighten Bulgaria into abandoning her policy of neutrality in favor of the Peace Front. Others suggest that Turkey was testing Bulgaria's reaction and think that had the Bulgarians taken the demonstration of Turkish military strength lying down, the latter would have occupied strategic positions, such as the Dervish hill. In any event, the reaction in Bulgaria was firm, determined and popular, and it is disquieting that several weeks ago Bulgarian troops should have been marching eastwards, cheerfully assuring inquirers that they were off to fight the Turks.

Though the Turkish Government is mistrusted, there is under ordinary circumstances, a widespread feeling of friendship for the Turkish people. One of the surprises that meets every newcomer in Bulgaria

is

is that despite the 500 years of Turkish rule and the atrocious massacres, Bulgarians will say that they got on well with the Turks. Neither the Bulgarian Government nor people feel that they have any claims whatever against Turkey, and the Prime Minister's ill fated policy of a rapprochement with Turkey was popular. It is regrettable therefore that the recent events should have stirred up bad feeling in one of the rare areas in the Balkans where it is not endemic.

Another result of this recent period of tension has of course been to increase further Bulgaria's suspicion of Britain, the growth of which the Legation began reporting several months ago. In this connection I have heard it rumored in opposition circles that the British Minister "encouraged" the Prime Minister to make his unsuccessful visit to Ankara, and that Mr. Kiosseivanoff suspects that Mr. Rendel is responsible for Mr. Stoicho Moshanoff's reception by King George and the other attentions bestowed on him during his stay in England. (See despatch No. 305 of August 3).

As the Legation has previously indicated the democracies apparently washed their hands of Bulgaria in April when they decided to guarantee Greece and Rumania. Certainly they have shown no real interest in Bulgaria since then. This negative attitude was discouraging enough, but the concentration of Turkish troops is interpreted here as a positive threat. This will further dampen any hopes of consideration of Bulgarian claims on their merits and, as reported in the despatch under reference, the Prime Minister stated

that

that a Turkish attack would in all probability lead to pushing Bulgaria into the German camp. To the majority of Bulgarians who remain anti-German this is an unpleasant and alarming prospect. The Bulgarian Government's anxiety to obtain arms has certainly increased and I am confident that at least until they are delivered, Bulgaria will continue to take the greatest pains not to offend Germany. In the meantime Russia, the traditional friend of Bulgaria, remains the great imponderable.

In sum, I believe ill-will and suspicion have been engendered by this concentration of troops and little if anything gained by the Peace Front unless, as some Bulgarians suspect, the British would rather have Bulgaria in the enemy's camp than as a friend to whom they are indebted.

Respectfully yours,

Hugh Millard

Hugh Millard
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

File 710
HM/RWH

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CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

767.74

767.74/90

SUBJECT

Bulgarian Minister states that neither Bulgaria or Turkey have withdrawn troops from the Turkish frontier.

For the original paper from which reference is taken

90

See Tel#76 6 p.m.
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Oct. 31, 1939 From Tel/ Bulgaria (Millard)

File No. 741.6711/30

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (br)

SOFIA

Dated November 11, 1939

FROM

Rec'd 9:04 p. m.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
NOV 15 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NOV 14 1939
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State,

Washington.

79, November 11, 1 p. m.

Reports have been current for some days that through British good offices a reduction of troops on both sides of the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier would take place shortly.

The British Minister who has returned from a brief visit to the British Ambassador at Istanbul confirms to me that for some time British efforts had been made to bring this about and admitted that owing to the concentration of Turkish troops on the frontier considerable feeling had been aroused against Great Britain on the grounds that the latter was behind this (see especially my despatches 314, August 18 and 324, September 14). He stated that the Turks have now agreed to reduce the number of their troops by 50% and that the Bulgarian Premier had promised him that the number of Bulgarian troops would be greatly reduced.

It was today officially announced that orders had been issued that the classes called for training in October will be released on November 20 and not replaced.

MILLARD

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Central File: Decimal File 767.74, Political Relations Of States, Relations; Bi-Lateral Treaties., Turkey And Bulgaria, August 8, 1930 - November 11, 1939. August 8, 1930 - November 11, 1939. MS Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States: Records of the U.S. Department of State, 1930-1944: Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations of Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States, 1930-1939. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5111394042%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbookmark-GDSC. Accessed 21 June 2025.